

MACAULAY  
ESSAY ON  
MILTON

COTTERILL



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MACAULAY'S ESSAY ON MILTON.



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MACAULAY'S ESSAY 1901

ON  
MILTON

WITH  
NOTES, ABSTRACT, CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARIES,  
ETC.

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BY

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O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D INVENTOR OF HARMONIES,  
O SKILL'D TO SING OF TIME OR ETERNITY,  
GOD-GIFTED ORGAN-VOICE OF ENGLAND,  
MILTON, A NAME TO RESOUND FOR AGES;

WHOSE TITAN ANGELS, GABRIEL, ABDIEL,  
STARR'D FROM JEHOVAH'S GORGEOUS ARMOURIES,  
TOWER, AS THE DEEP-DOMED EMPYRÆAN  
RINGS TO THE ROAR OF AN ANGEL ONSET—

ME RATHER ALL THAT BOWERY LONELINESS,  
THE BROOKS OF EDEN MAZILY MURMURING,  
AND BLOOM PROFUSE AND CEDAR ARCHES  
CHARM, AS A WANDERER OUT IN OCEAN,

WHERE SOME REFULGENT SUNSET OF INDIA  
STREAMS O'ER A RICH AMBROSIAL OCEAN ISLE,  
AND CRIMSON-HUED THE STATELY PALMWOODS  
WHISPER IN ODOROUS HEIGHTS OF EVEN.

—*Tennyson.*

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## PREFACE.

IN his edition of Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* Mr. Matthew Arnold inveighs against the eagerness which is shown by the modern educationalist 'to add, set right, and annotate.' Our great endeavour, he says, should be to bring the learner 'face to face with masterpieces, and to hold him there, not distracting or rebutting him with needless excursions or trifling details.'

Every true lover of literature will agree heart and soul with Mr. Matthew Arnold's main contention. He cannot but feel the deepest gratitude for having been brought face to face with masterpieces in early life. What he thus gained has proved the one foundation of that pleasure-house, lowly it may be or lordly, which he has built for his soul, while all the lumber and scaffoldings of commentary and criticism have long ago been stowed away in some back-yard of the memory, to be used perchance from time to time in case of necessary repairs. Life teaches that the one true object of all literary culture is to foster that love for what is great in literature without which there can be no true understanding of its message, as it also teaches that the one true object of all scientific training is to awaken a love

of Nature and an appreciation of her infinite wonders, without which all mere knowledge of scientific facts is a vain acquisition.

But those who are not only theoretical educators know from a weary experience that, though it may be comparatively easy to bring one's horse to the water, and even to hold him there, it is by no means so easy to make him drink. They know moreover that many minds, both young and old, are in no wise 'distracted and rebutted' by what to others may seem 'needless excursions or trivial details,' and that in not a few cases even the enforced study of detail helps to develop an appreciation of masterpieces.

In his annotations to Johnson's *Lives* Mr. Matthew Arnold has exemplified his theory. To a text of 456 pages he has appended not quite seven pages of notes. At this rate the notes to Macaulay's *Essay on Milton* would occupy not quite one page.

But, whether or not this method be right in the case of a masterpiece—and as such he treats Johnson's *Lives*—Mr. Matthew Arnold would probably have been willing to allow that a very different method might be advisable in the case of an author whose productions he most assuredly did not class among the masterpieces of literature, but whom he has admitted to be 'pre-eminently fitted to give pleasure to all who are beginning to feel enjoyment in the things of the mind.'

Macaulay may not be a great writer in the highest sense of the word; his facts and his judgments may be alike untrustworthy; he may have no 'penetrative imagination'; his philosophy may be beneath contempt; he may not even have been aware, as Mr. Morison says,

of the existence of modern historical criticism ; he may make a ‘serious reader,’ such as Mr. Matthew Arnold, impatient ‘by tickling his ears with fine rhetoric’ ; and, worse than all perhaps, his once so admired style may be voted vicious and detestable—but, at all events with younger and less serious readers, ‘he hits the nascent taste for the things of the mind, possesses himself of it, stimulates it, draws it powerfully forth and confirms it.’<sup>1</sup>

It is for this that Macaulay’s Essays are so valuable to the educator of others, or of himself. And of all these Essays none is more valuable than the *Essay on Milton*. Its main subject is, from every point of view, important. Its allusions range over a great extent of history and literature. Its ‘redundancy of youthful enthusiasm’ and its ‘fine rhetoric’ awaken interest and curiosity in numberless subjects ; and the annotator should seize the opportunity thus offered, and place before the reader, while his appetite is thus sharpened, so much information, and in such a form, that it may prove digestible and nutritive—may be assimilated, and form an organic part of the learner’s intellectual constitution.

For this object curt and meagre notes are of little use. They are indeed often worse than useless. They cumber the memory with some fact or date, which lies there and rots ‘in disconnection dead and spiritless,—the most ‘trivial’ of all details, the most worthless of all encumbrances.

Let us take as an illustration the following passage of

<sup>1</sup>A French Critic on Milton : in Matthew Arnold’s *Mixed Essays*.

Johnson's *Life of Dryden*, and Mr. Matthew Arnold's annotation of the passage. Dryden, says Dr. Johnson, 'undertook a translation of Virgil, for which he had shown how well he was qualified by his version of the Pollio and two episodes, one of Nisus and Euryalus, the other of Mezentius and Lausus.' Now, any reader who is acquainted with these two episodes would certainly also know what was meant by 'the Pollio.' For such readers, therefore, no note at all was needed. Those, again, who may not have had the advantages enjoyed by Macaulay's schoolboy, and who therefore are unacquainted with the Pollio, would surely also be ignorant of these two episodes. But of Nisus and Euryalus, or of Mezentius and Lausus, Mr. Matthew Arnold says nothing. His sole remark on the passage is that 'The *Pollio* is Virgil's 4th Eclogue.' The *Pollio* Virgil's 4th Eclogue! Who, if he knows Virgil's Eclogues, cares to be reminded that the *Pollio* is the 4th? Who, if he does not know the Eclogues, is any wiser by being able to repeat, like an equation of two unknown terms, that the *Pollio*, of which he knows nothing, is the 4th of the Eclogues, of which he also knows nothing? Surely, to say nothing of the two episodes from the *Aeneid*, a few words about the *Pollio*, with its mysterious Sybilline or Oriental presage of a Messiah, might have aroused interest, and perhaps have opened up a new vista to the reader. Wherefore, then, merely burden his memory with this most useless and trivial detail, that 'The *Pollio* is Virgil's 4th Eclogue'?

For such reasons I have supplied in my notes to this Essay not merely just so much information as might enable the reader to skim over or scrape round the

innumerable allusions which block his passage, but information copious enough to float him, if he will, for a little distance up divers affluents springing from far mightier waters than the brawling stream down which he is travelling. The distant glimpses that he may now and then catch of these other scenes may perchance excite a desire of future exploration.

The comparison of Milton with Dante which Macaulay makes, although the points of contrast chosen are merely accidental and superficial, serves the purpose of the educator better than it would be served by any attempt to describe the essential differences of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Divina Commedia*—differences which can only be learnt by a study of the poems themselves. These superficial points of contrast, so graphically depicted by Macaulay's brilliant rhetoric, attract attention. The reader, it may be, feels a desire to know a little more about Farinata, or about 'the interview of Dante and Beatrice.' If, instead of telling him to 'see *Inferno* x.,' or to 'consult *Purgatory* xxx.,' we supply enough annotation to thoroughly interest him in the subject, it may possibly induce him on some future occasion to turn to Dante's great poem. He may possibly, like that 'poor Robert Hall,' at whom Mr. Matthew Arnold mocks, by aid of dictionary and grammar endeavour to make out Dante's own words, and, even if he should discover that Macaulay's parallel between Milton and Dante is as 'unverifiable' as Mr. Matthew Arnold (wrongly, I think) deems it to be, it may end in the revelation of a Vision of which no commentary or criticism could ever have given him more than a blurred and distorted conception.

Instead of attempting to give any biographical sketch, I have interwoven here and there in the notes a considerable amount of information about Milton, and have added a chronological Summary, in which the main facts of his life can be viewed in relation to co-temporary events. Introductions and biographical sketches are for the most part left unread. Any one who desires a consecutive account of Milton's life and writings will gain from Mr. Stopford Brooke's admirable little volume, or from Mr. Pattison's *Milton*, a far clearer conception than that which would be given him by a few pages of an Introduction. Still less necessary was it to give a detailed account of a period which is fully described in every English History.

Also in the case of Macaulay I have limited myself to a brief biographical Summary, and to a few facts immediately bearing on the composition of the Essay. If any should wish for a fuller acquaintance with the life of one who, though perhaps not 'great' from the literary critic's point of view, was in many ways a truly good and great man, they will do well to procure the most delightful *Life and Letters of Macaulay*, by his nephew, Sir George Trevelyan, a popular edition of which can be obtained for a very modest sum. Mr. Morison's *Macaulay* is also written in an attractive style, and contains many just criticisms.

Any account of the historical and literary events which were co-temporary with the life of Macaulay, a life which extended from the death of Cowper to the appearance of the *Idylls of the King*, would have been superfluous. This period, involving the reigns of four English monarchs and some thirteen Whig or Tory

administrations, the passing of the great Reform Bill, the Abolition of Slavery, the rise and fall of the Napoleonic Empire, and many other important world-events—a period in which Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Scott, and Goethe lived—is one which, if studied, can hardly be studied as a mere adjunct to Macaulay's *Essay*. He lived for some thirty-five years after writing this *Essay on Milton*. He lived moreover, as Mr. Morison says, ‘in almost complete isolation amid the active intellectual life of his day’; and it is, as Mr. Lowell justly remarks in his amusing criticism on Professor Masson's encyclopædic labours, ‘only such co-temporary events, opinions, or persons as are really operative on the character of the man we are studying that are of consequence.’

Subjoined is a list of books which I think may prove useful to those who intend to study the *Essay* thoroughly. I have not added Professor Masson's voluminous publications to the list, for they are not easily accessible, and they contain a vast amount of matter which, however useful it may be for some purposes, would only distract the student from the more important aspects of the subject.

#### MILTON.

- Milton*: by Stopford A. Brooke (*Classical Writers*: Macmillan).  
*Milton*: by Mark Pattison (*Engl. Men of Letters*: Macmillan).  
*Life of Milton*: by Dr. Johnson (ed. by K. Deighton: Macmillan).  
*Criticisms on Milton*: by Addison (Cassell's *National Library*).  
*A French Critic on Milton*: by M. Arnold (*Mixed Essays*: Smith, Elder & Co.).  
*Milton*: an address by M. Arnold (*Essays in Criticism*: Macmillan).  
Hallam's *Literary History* (Murray).  
*Milton*: by J. R. Lowell (*Essays*: Walter Scott).

*Milton's Prose Works*, 5 vols. (Bohn's Library).

*Conversation between Cowley and Milton* (Macaulay's *Miscell. Writings*).

### DANTE.

*Divina Commedia*: transl. by Longfellow (verse), with Notes (Routledge).

*Inferno*: transl. (prose), by Dr. Carlyle (Chapman & Hall).

*Purgatory and Paradise*: transl. (prose), by A. J. Butler (Macmillan).

*Selections from the Inferno*, with Life of Dante etc. (Clarendon Press).

*Shadow of Dante*: by Miss Rossetti.

*Introduction to Study of Dante*: by J. A. Symonds (Smith, Elder & Co.).

*Essay on Dante*: Dean Church (Macmillan).

*Criticism on Dante*: by Macaulay (*Miscell. Writings*).

*Hero as Poet*: by Carlyle.

Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, iii., chap. 14.

### MACAULAY.

*Life and Letters*: by Sir George Trevelyan (Longmans: pop. edn., 2s. 6d.).

*Macaulay*: by J. C. Morison (*Engl. Men of Letters*: Macmillan).

(And other biographies by Morley, Leslie Stephens, Bagehot, Saintsbury etc.)

### HISTORICAL.

*History of England*: by Macaulay (Longmans: pop. edn., 5s.).

*Macaulay's Essays* on Hallam, Mackintosh etc. (Longmans: pop. edn., 2s. 6d.).

Green's *Short History*, ch. viii. and ix. (Macmillan).

Gardiner's *Student's History*, Part vi. (Longmans).

Gardiner's *Puritan Revolution* (*Epochs of Mod. Hist.*: Longmans).

*Oliver Cromwell*: by F. Harrison (*Twelve Engl. Statesmen*: Macmillan).

*Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*: by Carlyle, 5 vols. (Chapman & Hall: shilling edition).

Clarendon's *History of the Civil War*,

## REMARKS ON THE ESSAY.

'IN 1823,' says Sir George Trevelyan, 'the leading members of the cleverest set of boys who were ever together at a public school found themselves collected once more at Cambridge. Of the former staff of the *Etonian*, Praed, Moultrie, Nelson, Coleridge, and Edmond Beales ... were now in residence at King's or Trinity. Mr. Charles Knight, too enterprising a publisher to let such a quantity of youthful talent run to waste, started a periodical, which was largely supported by undergraduates and Bachelors of Arts, among whom the veterans of the Eton press formed a brilliant nucleus.'

To this *Quarterly Magazine* Macaulay contributed regularly, two or three of his pieces appearing in each Number during 1823 and 1824. Most of these pieces have been reproduced ('only too freely,' thinks his nephew) in his *Miscellaneous Writings*.

'Spirited verse,' says another biographer (Mr. Morrison), 'prose, fiction, and criticism on poets, were his first efforts in literature. ... Two battle-pieces in metre, *Ivry* and *Naseby*, still live by reason of their vigour and animation, and are little, if at all, inferior to his later

productions in verse. The *Fragments of a Roman Tale* and the *Scenes from 'Athenian Revels'* are so sparkling and vivacious, and show such a natural turn for dialogue and dramatic *mise en scène*, that it says a great deal for Macaulay's good sense and literary conscientiousness that he remained content with this first success, and did not continue to work a vein which would have brought him prompt, if ephemeral, popularity.' Mr. Morison, however, considers the most noteworthy of these pieces to be the *Conversation between Mr. Cowley and Mr. Milton touching the great Civil War*, and this was also (as Sir G. Trevelyan, dissenting, tells us) Macaulay's opinion. It was his 'decided favourite among his earlier efforts in literature.'

Whatever may be the comparative value of these earlier efforts, weighed one against the other in the scales of literary criticism, some readers of the *Scenes from 'Athenian Revels'* may feel inclined to differ from Mr. Morison. They may wish that Macaulay had continued to work this vein; and they may be of the opinion that this vein might have brought him, if not such prompt, at all events a less ephemeral popularity than that which he won by criticism, or by history. They may seem to recognize in this fragment the presence of powers—as yet crude and undeveloped—which are intrinsically of so much higher value than those of the critic or the historian that even their unsuccessful exercise would have been preferable to all literary celebrity. Others again may doubt whether, in spite of the mimetic cleverness displayed in this piece, Macaulay possessed true dramatic gifts: whether he had that 'penetrative imagination,' and that insight

into human character and human motives, without which his almost unrivalled powers of pictorial composition would have proved futile. However that may be—whether or not Macaulay missed his vocation—it is not without a sensation of pleasure and relief, such as at times one feels in getting right away into the woods or mountains, that one turns to the *Athenian Revels*, or the *Lays of Ancient Rome*, and forgets the polemical rhetorician and the critic of Croker and Montgomery.

With regard to the *Essay on Milton*, there are (besides the *Athenian Revels*, in which Euripides is ridiculed) two of these earlier pieces which claim especial attention—the *Criticism on Dante* and the *Conversation between Cowley and Milton*. In them and in the Essay we find not only similar sentiments and similar lines of argument, but many identical illustrations and forms of expression. Denham's 'garb and clothes,' Gulliver's Travels, Othello, Æschylus, the Pastor Fido, Doges, Stadholders, Janissaries, Oromasdes and Arimanes themselves, and many other such forms, familiar to readers of the Essay, made their first appearance in these contributions to Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*. And it is not only on this account interesting to peruse them. It is also instructive, and amusing, to note how in the Essay Macaulay again and again flatly contradicts what he had stated a few months before. In the Notes I have pointed out a few of the most glaring of these discrepancies, but I have not thought it worth while to subject his utterances, whether on art or on politics, to any serious comparative analysis.

In October, 1824, when writing to his father, who

was nowise pleased with his son's connection with the *Magazine*, Macaulay asserts that its 'tone and character will bear comparison, in a moral point of view, with any periodical publication not professedly religious'; and he adds, 'When I see you, I will mention to you a piece of secret history which will show you how important our connection with this work may possibly become.' This 'piece of secret history' was the fact that overtures had been made to Macaulay by Jeffrey, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, and in August, 1825, appeared the *Essay on Milton*.

'The effect on the author's reputation,' says Sir George Trevelyan, 'was instantaneous. Like Lord Byron, he awoke one morning and found himself famous... Murray declared that it would be worth the copyright of *Childe Hurold* to have Macaulay on the staff of the *Quarterly*. The family breakfast table in Bloomsbury was covered with cards of invitation to dinner from every quarter of London.... A warm admirer of Robert Hall, Macaulay heard with pride how the great preacher, then well nigh worn out with that long disease, his life, was discovered lying on the floor, employed in learning by aid of grammar and dictionary enough Italian to enable him to verify the parallel between Milton and Dante. But the compliment that of all others came most nearly home—the only commendation of his literary talent which even in the innermost domestic circle he was ever known to repeat—was the sentence with which Jeffrey acknowledged the receipt of his manuscript: *The more I think, the less I can conceive where you picked up that style.*'

How characteristic this was of Macaulay during his

whole life may be perhaps best shown by the following quotations from his letters and diaries. ‘My German library consists of all Goethe’s works, all Schiller’s works, ... some of Lessing, and other works of less fame. I like Schiller’s style exceedingly.’ ‘I am now busy with (the poet) Lucan. ... The character which Cato gives Pompey is a pure gem of rhetoric, without one flaw. ... It is impossible not to allow that the poem is a very extraordinary one. ... Lucan’s complete mastery of political and philosophical rhetoric etc. ... I know of no declamation in the world, not even Cicero’s best, which equals some passages in the *Pharsalia*.’ ‘Seneca’s style affects me in something the same way as that of Gibbon. ... To read him straightforward is like dining on nothing but anchovy sauce.’ ‘The childish quibbling of Socrates provokes me. ... I am more and more convinced that the merit of Plato lies in his talent for narrative and description, in his rhetoric, in his humour, and in his exquisite Greek.’ ‘I cannot deny that Rousseau had great eloquence and great vigour of mind. At the same time he does not amuse me, and to me a book which is not amusing wants the highest of recommendations.’ ‘I shall not be satisfied unless I produce (in the *History*) something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies.’

The *Essay on Milton* consists of two parts of almost equal length. In the first the subject is treated from the literary, in the second from the political point of view. In the Notes I have ventured to comment freely, perhaps sometimes rather too freely, on Macaulay’s utterances, so that it would be superfluous to enter here upon any general estimate of his critical acumen or his

historical candour. Those who may wish to obtain a second-hand estimate—for first-hand it is only to be obtained from an impartial and intelligent study of not only Macaulay's writings, but also of the subjects on which he wrote—will find a full and fairly sympathetic account of his 'Characteristics' in Mr. Morison's volume. The strictures which Matthew Arnold, in his *French Critic on Milton*, passes on the Essay are for the most part perhaps not unjust, but are pervaded by a spirit of mockery and acerbity which provokes sympathy rather with Macaulay than with his critic, and makes it more difficult than ever to appreciate the fruits of the gospel of sweetness and light. To say that the Essay 'in nowise helps one to get at the real truth about Milton, whether as a man or a poet,' is to say what is obviously not true. It is indeed true that if any one were to accept Macaulay's picture, and were to make no attempt to compare that picture with the original, he would possess a very incomplete and a somewhat distorted conception of Milton. But to the great majority of readers the Essay proves very helpful. It 'hits their nascent taste,' as Matthew Arnold himself says, 'possesses itself of it and stimulates it, draws it powerfully forth and confirms it.'

The asperity of such criticism seems, moreover, all the more uncalled for when we remember the criticisms passed by Macaulay on himself at a later period of his life. In 1838, writing to Napier, an editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, he says: 'You will believe that I tell you what I sincerely think, when I say that I am not successful in analyzing the effect of works of genius. ... I have never written a page of criticism on poetry, or the

fine arts, which I would not burn, if I had the power.' Again, in his Preface to the collected Essays we find: 'The criticism on Milton, which was written when the author was fresh from college, and which contains scarcely a paragraph such as his matured judgment approves, still remains overloaded with gaudy and ungraceful ornament.'

## ABSTRACT OF THE ESSAY.

**Introductory:** Discovery of a Treatise by Milton on *Christian Doctrine*, which had lain buried for about 150 years in the presses of the State Paper Office. Description of the work. Advantage taken of this discovery to commemorate the genius and virtues of Milton.

### First Part: *Milton's genius.*

1. (4-9) Milton is placed by general suffrage among the greatest poets. It is, however, objected by detractors that he enjoyed an advantage over other great poets by living in an enlightened age. But the reverse of this is true, for as civilization advances poetry declines; as men know and reason more they make better theories and worse poems. The illusive power of poetry is strongest among children and in a rude society, and 'he who in an enlightened age aspires to be a great poet must become a little child, and unlearn much of his knowledge.' No poet had to contend against more disadvantages than Milton, and one of these was his profound and elegant scholarship. This introduces the subject of

2. (9-10) *Milton's Latin verse*; which leads up to a general survey (not a complete examination) of

#### 3. *Milton's Poetry.*

(a) (10-12) Its most striking characteristic: its magical suggestive power; muster-rolls of charmed names. His peculiar manner nowhere more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and *Penseroso*.

(b) (12-16) Milton's dramatic poems are 'lyric poems in the form of plays.' Remarks on the 'business of a dramatist'; on the lyric origin of Greek Drama; on Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The *Samson Agonistes* is the 'least successful effort of the genius of Milton.' The *Comus*, framed on the model of the Italian Masque, and superior to all similar poems.

(c) (16-24) *Paradise Lost* superior to *Paradise Regained*—which, however, is an 'admirable poem.' Comparison of the former with the *Divine Comedy*. The 'exact details' of Dante and the 'dim intimations' of Milton, illustrated by examples

from the two Poems. The superiority of Milton in representation of supernatural beings. Excursus on 'spirit'; metaphysical conception and poetic presentation thereof.—Milton right in avoiding 'metaphysical accuracy' and in presenting spiritual beings materially; but he 'wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians' and could not 'drop immateriality out of sight.' He therefore rightly 'took his stand on debatable ground, and left the whole in ambiguity.' Dante's angels and fiends excite no 'mysterious interest.' Milton's angels and devils compared with the gods and daemons of *Æschylus*; his Satan compared with Prometheus.

- (d) (24-28) Macaulay returns to his parallel between Milton and Dante to show that their poetry 'has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities.' This leads to a contrast of Dante's melancholic gloom with the 'sedate and majestic patience' of Milton. Illustrated by Milton's *Sonnets*, which are 'dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel.' Hence, by easy transition, we pass to the part that Milton took in the 'great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes.'

#### **Second Part: Milton's public conduct and political writings.**

1. *Milton's public conduct* is to be approved or condemned according as the resistance of the people to Charles I. was justifiable or criminal. This depends on the 'naked constitutional question' whether the Great Rebellion was not as justifiable as the Revolution of 1688.
  - (a) (30-33) The principles of the Revolution often grossly misrepresented. James II. not expelled for his religion, but because he had 'broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom.' Now Charles had done no less. Therefore, 'unless the Revolution were treason, the Great Rebellion was laudable.'
  - (b) (33-36) Answer to the objection, 'Why not adopt milder measures?' Because Charles was not to be trusted. Even if the Tudors had exercised oppressive powers, Charles had renounced them for money, and yet ever again violated his promises. Therefore there was no choice but the Rebellion.
2. *Milton's political association* with such characters as the Puritans and Regicides defended.
  - (a) (36-40) Excesses and outrages attendant on all revolutions. The violence of these outrages only proves the necessity of a revolution. Milton, as other good and wise men, joined the party fighting for Liberty, and could not have acted otherwise, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in that party.
  - (b) (40-41) Milton commended for approval of the execution of Charles after it had occurred, although it was a political error.

- (c) (41-44) Milton's acceptance of office under a military usurper defended. Cromwell's assumption of arbitrary power necessary and not dangerous to Liberty. The shameful days of the Restoration vindicate Milton's conduct in supporting Cromwell.
- (d) (44-52) Milton distinguished from his associates. Description of the various 'sincere' parties, viz. Puritans, Heathen, and Royalists. Milton belonged to none of these. 'In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union.' But the 'great and peculiar splendour' of his conduct consists in his championship of Liberty of Thought. This leads to a consideration of
3. (52-55) *Milton's Prose writings.*

#### Conclusion.

Sentiments excited by the 'publication of this relic of Milton.' Macaulay, 'transported a hundred and fifty years back,' fancies himself in the small lodging of the old blind poet, kneeling before him, kissing and weeping upon his hand, and contesting with Milton's daughters the privilege of reading Homer to him. Final remarks on Milton's character as 'visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High.'

## MILTON.

AUGUST, 1825.

*Joannis Miltoni, Angli, de Doctrinâ Christianâ libri duo posthumi.*

A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By JOHN MILTON, translated from the Original by Charles R. Sumner, M.A., etc., etc. 1825.

TOWARDS the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy-keeper of the state papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office, met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign despatches written by Milton, while he filled the office of Secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish trials and the Rye-house Plot. The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed *To Mr. Skinner, Merchant.* On examination, the large manuscript proved to be the long lost Essay on the Doctrines of Christianity, which, accord- 10 ing to Wood and Toland, Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford parliament, and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript 20

may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner, who was commanded by his Majesty to edite and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honourable to his talents and to his character. His version is not indeed very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanliness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of his subject compelled him to use many words

“That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.”

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley. He wears the garb, but not the clothes of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the

best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seemed to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the *Paradise Lost* without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature 10 of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days, and this essay will follow the *Defensio Populi* to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable 20 circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn, to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint, until they have awakened the devotional 30 feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him, a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we

are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day, to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known ; and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilised world, his place has been assigned  
10 among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilisation, supplied, by their own powers, the want of instruction, and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity  
20 models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created ; he lived in an enlightened age ; he received a finished education ; and we must therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavourable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson has  
30 thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule. The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilisation which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired ; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

We think that, as civilisation advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilised age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that 20 hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcket's little dialogues on Political Economy could teach Montague or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of 30 study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician,

the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive, and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical, that of a half-civilised people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations, of a change by which science 10 gains and poetry loses. Generalisation is necessary to the advancement of knowledge; but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyse human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in 20 a moral sense, like Shaftesbury; he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius; or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lacrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe, or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have 30 contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in the Fable of the Bees. But could Mandeville have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man, a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy

poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colours. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for 10 the vigour and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled :

“As imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.”

These are the fruits of the “fine frenzy” which he ascribes to the poet—a fine frenzy doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is the truth 20 of madness. The reasonings are just; but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, every thing ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence of all people children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or 30 Lear, as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding-hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should

feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good  
10 ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare; but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodist, according to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping knife while he shouts his death-song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over  
20 their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilised community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and  
30 the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must

take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigour and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labour, 10 and long meditation, employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education: he was a profound and elegant classical scholar: he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature: he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe, from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later 20 times who has been distinguished by the excellence of his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination: nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the middle ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was 30 as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly, imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill-suited to the

production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the Paradise Lost should have written the Epistle to Manso was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed in all the Latin poems of Milton the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all  
10 other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

“ About him exercised heroic games  
The unarmed youth of heaven. But o'er their heads  
Celestial armoury, shield, helm, and spear,  
Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.”

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed  
20 to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind, that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style, which no rival has been able to equal, and no  
30 parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abun-

dant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests; not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the Iliad. Homer gives him no choice, and 10 requires from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light, that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed, unless the mind of the reader co-operate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the key-note, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The 20 expression in general means nothing: but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced, than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence; substitute one synonym for 30 another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying, "Open Wheat," "Open Barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden in his attempt to

translate into his own diction some parts of the *Paradise Lost* is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations, we may remark that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known or more frequently repeated than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like 10 the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood, the school-room, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted 20 forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamoured knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and the *Penseroso*. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others, as attar of roses differs from ordinary rose-water, the close packed essence from the thin diluted mixture. They are indeed not so much poems, as collections of hints, from each of which the reader, is to 30 make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The *Comus* and the *Samson Agonistes* are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays. There are perhaps no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the

dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery, in which a single moveable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us successively, from 10 the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters, patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers, the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself, without reserve, to his own emotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavoured to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek drama, on the model of which the 20 Samson was written, sprang from the Ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists co-operated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. Æschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the 30 narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up with the veneration of disciples to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and Æschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew

writers. The book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytaemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never 10 been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance; but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

20 Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly, much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's poet" sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairy-land kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the Samson Agonistes. Had Milton taken Æschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures 30 of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like

an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralise each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The Comus is framed on the model of the Italian Masque, as the Samson is framed on the model of the Greek Tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to the Faithful Shepherdess, as the Faithful Shepherdess is to the Aminta, or the Aminta to the Pastor Fido. It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain 20 style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His Muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May-day. Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the Comus to the distinction which he afterwards neglected in the Samson. He made his Masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in 30 semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The inter-

ruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," says the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles 10 of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labour of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis, he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

" Now my task is smoothly done,  
I can fly, or I can run,"

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the Elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells 20 of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedarèd alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the Paradise Regained, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the Paradise 30 Lost, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the Paradise Lost to the Paradise Regained is not more decided than the superiority of the Paradise Regained to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the

general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the *Paradise Lost* is the *Divine Comedy*. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the 10 hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the colour, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His 20 similes are the illustrations of a traveller. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn; not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem; but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon was like that of Aqua 30 Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure

of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea-monster which the mariner mistakes for an island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas : his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod. “His face seemed to me as long and as broad as  
10 the ball of St. Peter’s at Rome ; and his other limbs were in proportion ; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair.” We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Cary’s translation is not at hand ; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazarus-house in the eleventh book of the Paradise Lost with the last ward of Malebolge in  
20 Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery : Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance, Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante ? “There was such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together ; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs.”

30 We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedence between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable ; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The Divine Comedy is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very

man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death, who has read the dusky characters on the portal within which there is no hope, who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon, who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghi-gnazzo. His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer. His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel. The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust, unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity, with a sobriety even in its horrors, with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante as the adventures of Amadis differ from those of Gulliver. The author of Amadis would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift, the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man, who lived nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophising horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him: and as this is a point on which many rash and ill-considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery, is that of attempting to philosophise too much. Milton has been often censured for

ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phænomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no 10 idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word; but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colours to be called a painting.

20 Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshipped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of Gods and Goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the Sun the worship which, in 30 speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world,

while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception ; but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the 10 Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty legions, were humbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new Paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George took the place of Mars. St. Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity, and the homage of 20 chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings, but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in Cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the 30 most important principle.

From these considerations, we infer that no poet who should affect that metaphysical accuracy, for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The

imaginings of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical colouring can produce no illusion, when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of 10 the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirits should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for 20 the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating 30 his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque indeed beyond any that

ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest; but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and daemons without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper and eat 10 heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have been at an *auto-da-fé*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which 20 give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, 30 but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and daemons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced

in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Æschylus seem to harmonise less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticoes in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favourite 10 gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart, the gigantic Titans, and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters also are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture: he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even 20 exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermittent misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have

been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, coloured by 10 their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit; that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the Divine Comedy we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts 20 of earth nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness." The gloom of his character dis-colours all the passions of men, and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of 30 him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favourite writers of the Sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of Comus, grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the Masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of Satyrs and Goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes, such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die,

Hence it was that, though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental haram, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works; but it is most strongly displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet, as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an unexpected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed for ever, led him to musings which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterise these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthology, or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The

noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The Sonnets are more or less striking according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities  
10 which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind, at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes, liberty and despotism, reason and  
20 prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

30 Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The civil war, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends

of liberty laboured under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly. Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson. May's History of the Parliament is good; but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow is foolish and violent; and most 10 of the later writers who have espoused the same cause, Old-mixon for instance, and Catherine Macaulay, have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candour or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language, that of Clarendon, and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass 20 of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned according as the resistance of the people to Charles the First shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important 30 question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage ground; but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority, that we are not unwilling to imitate the

ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm that every reason which can be urged in favour of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favour of what is called the Great Rebellion.

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than 10 his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist ; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices, a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant ; but we say that this Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction 20 between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential, and take only what is accidental ; they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public 30 imitation all that is defective. If in any part of any great example there be anything unsound, these flesh-flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that

“Their labour must be to pervert that énd,  
And out of good still to find means of evil.”

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights, liberty, security, toleration, all go for nothing with them. One sect there was which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire there was, so unhappily circumstanced that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to 10 contemplate, and which seem to them not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America. They stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right, which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era. The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every 20 wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory. They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it: the arbitrary Charles, or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic, or Frederic the Protestant. On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public 30 with an opinion that James the Second was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant Revolution.

But this certainly was not the case; nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's Abridgment believe

that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning ; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily not to popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic; but they excluded Catholics from the  
10 crown because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution, declared the throne vacant was this, “that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom.” Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question, then, is this : Had Charles the First broken the fundamental laws of England ?

No person can answer in the negative, unless he refuses  
20 credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the King himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament, had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion mention one act of James the Second to which a parallel is not to be found in the history  
30 of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two Houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious

manner. Not a single session of parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate; the right of petition was grossly violated; arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments, were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason ; if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures ? Why, after the King had consented to so many reforms and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war ? The ship-money had been given up. The Star Chamber had been abolished. Provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions ? He too had offered to call a free parliament and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the King. He had no doubt passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them ? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives; but where was the security that he would not resume them ? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind, a man who made and broke promises with equal facility, a man whose honour had been a hundred times pawned, and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the

Petition of Right. The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very Act which he had been paid to pass.

- 10 For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim, by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase, infringed by the perfidious king who had recognised them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another parliament; another chance was given to our fathers. Were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut*? Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of  
20 Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content  
30 themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James the Second no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household

decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates; and the defence is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of 10 the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, a good man but a bad king. We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a 20 good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed 30 them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has laboured, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admir-

able in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them. But those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and 10 misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the Scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts; soldiers revelling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, 20 enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy-men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag;—all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to 30 differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the Devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity 10 and ignorance of the people; and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our civil war. The heads of the church and state reaped only that which they had sown. The government had prohibited free discussion: it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were 20 assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres. It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without 30 restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion; and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation,

and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice : they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance ; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendour and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there 10 would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were for ever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which 20 was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her ! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory !

There is only one cure for the evils which newly-acquired 30 freedom produces ; and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell, he cannot bear the light of day : he is unable to discriminate colours, or recognise faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half-blind in the house of bondage. But let them

gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go 10 into the water till he had learnt to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of Public Liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blameworthy excesses of that time. The favourite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct 20 which he pursued with regard to the execution of the King. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides. We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential 30 distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The King can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister only ought to be responsible for the acts of the Sovereign. If so, why not

impeach Jefferies and retain James? The person of a King is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a King is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James 10 from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace, and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who on the fifth of November thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making 20 all opposition fall before him until he became our King and Governor, can on the thirtieth of January contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the King from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a 30 murderer, and a public enemy"; but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage: his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father: they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body

of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the Regicides blameable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred; and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion; but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty we wish that the thing had not been done, while the people disapproved of it. But for the sake of public liberty we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "*Æneæ magni dextra*," gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell, his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was

then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it, till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions, were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy.  
10 But even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded indeed the first place in the commonwealth ; but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder, or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative  
20 authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments ; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandising himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his parliaments questioned the authority under which  
30 they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then, it must be acknowledged, he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself

by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect that, at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose 10 well no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honour been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resent- 20 ment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice, were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But, had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second 30 protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect.

Party plotted against party. The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the 10 paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The King cringed to his rival that he might trample on his people, sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed with complacent infamy her degrading insults and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots and the jests of buffoons regulated the policy of the state. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha of every fawning dean. In 20 every high place worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch ; and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime and disgrace to disgrace, till the race, accursed of God and man, was a second time driven forth, to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a by-word and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And, for that purpose, it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended

by a crowd of camp-followers, an useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose, who kissed the hand of the King in 1640 and spat in his face in 1649, who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall and when he was 10 dug up to be hanged at Tyburn, who dined on calves' heads or stuck up oak-branches, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious 20 observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of 30 their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy

of history is to be learnt. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

*“Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il río  
Che mortali perigli in se contiene.  
Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,  
Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.”*

Those who roused the people to resistance, who directed 10 their measures through a long series of eventful years, who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen, who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy, who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and 20 talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles the First, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles the Second was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets which contain only the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings 30 and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other

sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on his intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognised no title to superiority but his favour ; and, confident of that favour, 10 they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands ; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down 20 with contempt : for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians 30 ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the Evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no

vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker: but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement he 10 prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half-maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace 20 behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them trans- 30 quil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoicks, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the

influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners.<sup>10</sup> We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach, and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity; that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest,<sup>20</sup> and an useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient<sup>30</sup> literature they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they some-

times found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candour. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse-boys, gamblers, and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which under 10 the stricter discipline of the Parliamentary armies were never tolerated. We will select a more favourable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the King was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ, with the mutes who throng their antechambers, and the Janissaries who mount guard at their gates. Our royalist countrymen were not heartless, dang-20 ling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valour, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honour, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent 30 as that of Duessa ; and, like the Red-Cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their

fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table they had also many of its virtues, courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a free-thinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the Court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, 20 while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

“As ever in his great task-master’s eye.”

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest sceptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, 30 their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolised by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish

for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honour and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonise best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination ; but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Syrens ; yet he glided by without 10 being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe ; but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendour, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the Pensero, which was published about the same time, will understand our 20 meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than any thing else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed, in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents ; but his hand is firm. He does nought in hate, but all in honour. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendour still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsaken king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their

voices against Ship-money and the Star-chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the King and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem, who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

"Oh, ye mistook ! Ye should have snatched his wand  
And bound him fast. Without the rod reversed,  
And backward mutters of dissevering power,  
We cannot free the lady that sits here  
Bound in strong fetters fixed and motionless."

20

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians ; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle ; but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He 30 therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object he attacked the licensing system in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His

attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply-seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded, the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear, when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the 10 changes he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapours, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He attacked the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility.

“Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit  
Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.”

30 It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a

perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost* has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, “a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies.”

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyse the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* and 10 the nervous rhetoric of the *Iconoclast*, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the *Treatise of Reformation*, and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*. But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, 20 we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his 30 affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word, the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it, the earnestness with which we should endeavour to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents

and his virtues, the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood, the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them ; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolising either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication 10 of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize ; and of these was 20 Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot without aspiring to emulate, not 30 indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he laboured for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

## NOTES.

THE full title of the manuscript is ‘*Joannis Miltoni Angli de Doctrina Christiana, ex sacris duntaxat libris petita, Disquisitionum libri duo posthumii, i.e. Two posthumous books of disquisitions by John Milton, Englishman, on Christian doctrine derived solely from the Holy Scriptures.*’

Macaulay’s account is taken almost literally from Sumner’s preface to his translation (July, 1825). The ‘adventures of the manuscript’ are now better known. The discovery (in 1852), among the State Papers, of various letters (from Dr. Barrow, Master of Trinity, and the printer Elzevir) confirmed Sumner’s conjecture that the Mr. Skinner with whom Milton deposited his manuscripts was not his former pupil Cyriack, but Daniel Skinner, a relation, possibly the nephew of Cyriack; and later discoveries of documents (see Masson’s *Milton*, vi. 790 *sq.*) have made this indubitable. This Daniel Skinner, elected a junior fellow of Trin. Coll. Camb. in 1674, evidently acted towards the close of Milton’s life as his amanuensis.

The first part of the ms. (196 out of 735 pages), which is ‘a corrected copy, prepared for the press,’ and is written in a ‘small and beautiful Italian hand,’ was transcribed not, as was formerly supposed, by Milton’s daughter Mary, but by Daniel Skinner, and it was to him that Milton bequeathed his Latin Letters of State and his doctrinal Treatise, probably on the condition that they should be printed in Holland, seeing that the publication of Cromwellian Despatches and Miltonic theology was likely to prove a difficult, if not a dangerous, undertaking for the young man, who was anxious to obtain official employment. The papers were therefore sent to the celebrated Amsterdam printer, Daniel Elzevir, and would probably have been published there in due course of time; but a copy of Milton’s *State Letters* had fallen into the hands of some London bookseller, and an anonymous edition appeared (in 1676). This forced the hand of Daniel Skinner, and his secret came to the

knowledge of Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State, who (as he informs us) advised the young man in very plain terms to 'air himself from such infectious a commerce as the friendship of Milton.' Daniel hereupon seems to have gone abroad, and to have visited Elzevir at Amsterdam, where he probably made an unsuccessful attempt to recover possession of the manuscripts. Pressure was then brought not only on the young man, who was threatened with the loss of his fellowship, but also on his father, Mr. Daniel Skinner, Senior, a 'merchant of Mark Lane,' and at his demand Elzevir sent the papers to London. Here they were handed over to Sir Joseph Williamson and deposited in the press of the old State Paper Office at Whitehall, where nearly 150 years later they were discovered 'wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed *To Mr. Skinner, Merchant.*'

In his Dedication—addressed as an apostolic epistle to the universal Church of Christ—Milton describes the origin and nature of his Treatise: 'I deemed it safest,' he says, 'and most advisable, to compile for myself, by my own labour and study, some original treatise, derived solely from the Word of God ... such a disquisition as might be useful in establishing my own faith ... to scrutinize and ascertain for myself the several points of my religious belief by the most careful perusal and meditation of the Holy Scriptures themselves ... I have chosen to fill my pages even to redundancy with quotations from Scripture, that so as little space as possible might be left for my own words.' After appealing to all lovers of truth to favour 'freedom of discussion and inquiry,' and asserting the right of private interpretation of the Scriptures, he divides his subject into two parts: 'Faith, or the knowledge of God, and Love, or the worship of God.' The following brief abstract of some of Milton's tenets will illustrate Macaulay's comments both on the Treatise and on Milton's poetry:

From the teachings of Nature and Conscience every sane man must believe in a God. But by natural religion we cannot attain to knowledge of God. For this Revelation is necessary; and Milton accepts the canonical Scriptures unconditionally and without discussion as the one medium of Revelation, and the inspired Word of God, although he admits the presence of 'corruptions and falsifications,' especially in the New Testament, and discriminates the inner from the external Gospel, the spiritual from the literal, maintaining that 'the Spirit is a more certain guide than the Scriptures.' [Cf. *P.L.* xii. 510, where he says that truth is 'left only in those written records pure, though not but by the Spirit understood.']. His idea of the divine Being does not seem to involve any striking heterodoxy, and he confesses his belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but he asserts that the conception of a triune Godhead, and of three divine Persons, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eval, is a vain subtlety of Scholastic philosophy, not supported by the SS. or the Apostle's Creed. His creed seems, indeed, to have a striking resemblance to the doctrine of

the Neoplatonists, who preceded the Christian Schoolmen. As we see from the cosmogony of the *Paradise Lost*, God the Father is conceived as existing 'before eternity,' and the Word as begotten 'with eternity.' Through the Word (and Milton endeavours to prove from the SS. that it was *through* and not *by* the Word) all things, including the heavens and the angels were created.<sup>1</sup> On the strength of such tenets Milton is accused of Arianism, or 'semi-Arianism'—an accusation to which Dante exposes himself still more by conceiving not only the heavens and the angels, but the human soul, and the bodies of Adam and Christ as having been 'immediately' created, without the co-operation of the Word.

Macaulay's remark about the 'eternity of matter' betrays his metaphysical incompetence, of which he seems to have been by no means ashamed. He evidently does not understand what Milton means by saying that 'matter is imperishable and eternal.' For this 'matter' is not, as Macaulay would lead one to infer, the material substance of natural objects, but that invisible and impalpable existence which philosophers call 'prime matter,' and which according to Milton is 'a substance (an existence) derived from no other source than the fountain of all substance, at first confused and formless, afterwards adorned and digested by the hand of God,' and *essentially* the same as spirit (see note on p. 20, l. 11). This 'prime matter' was not 'created out of nothing,' but is an emanation from God, and 'not only from God, but out of God.' This again is the Emanation theory of the Neoplatonists (who probably derived it from the Brahmins), for which the Christian Schoolmen substituted the doctrine of Creation out of nothing. In like manner Dante conceives the heavens and hell (see the inscription over Hell's portal given on p. 19, l. 2) as eternal, and created out of 'prima materia,' and the angels to be 'substances'—not natural material objects, but supernatural compounds of 'prime matter' with 'prime form.' (See note on Milton's and Dante's angels, p. 23, l. 11.) Such tenets no wise necessarily, as is often stated, place Milton or Dante 'in the company of the Pantheists,' or of 'pantheistic materialists,' at least not unless we are to extend the word to include such 'Higher Pantheism' as that of Tennyson. Milton holds that *in our present mortal state* soul and body are indiscreptibly one, and that both are derived directly from our parents—or rather, that soul is transmitted from the father to his children. [This is the 'Traducian' theory. Dante seems rather to lean towards 'Creationism,' which maintains that at least some portion of every human soul is directly created by God.] Death is the extinction of the natural man. At death the soul passes into a state of suspended existence. At the resurrection our human nature will be recreated into a glorified being. [Cf. Dante, Par. vii. *ad fin.*]

Polygamy, according to Milton, having been allowed under the Old Dispensation, cannot be regarded as essentially criminal or immoral. Monogamy is merely a matter of expedience.

Times and places for prayer are indifferent: prayer need not find any expression in words; liturgies and set forms of prayer are stumbling-blocks; even the Lord's Prayer was not given us for vain

<sup>1</sup> For Milton's earlier views on the Sonship of Christ, see *P. L.* iii. 62 138, 305, 383; v. 608, 719; vi. 42, 680; x. 55, 68 etc.; and *P. R.* iv. 514; vi. 163 etc.

repetition. The Jewish Sabbath was abolished with the Old Law, and the first day of the week was not substituted for it. The 'Lord's Day,' mentioned once only, was probably an annual festival. The weekly day of rest is expedient, but it is a sin to lay any burden on men's backs which is not ordained by the Scriptures. For the wicked there is laid up in a future life not only the loss of God's presence, but, for some, eternal torment. But this torment will 'vary with degrees of guilt.'

In his 'Preliminary Observations' ('Milton's Prose Works,' Bohn's Library, vol. iv.) Sumner remarks justly on the wide departure which the doctrines of the *Treatise* show from the theological tenets expressed in the *Ode on the Nativity*, *Lycidas*, and *Allegro* and *Penseroso*. Doubtless after his break with Presbyterianism Milton's views developed a considerable amount of independence and latitude, many forms of which seem to have been rife among his fellow Puritans.

**Page 1, l. 6. Popish trials:** in consequence of the fictitious 'Popish Plot' (1678). 'Titus Oates, a Baptist minister before the Restoration, a curate and navy chaplain after it, but left penniless by his infamous character, had sought bread in a conversion to Catholicism.' In his resentment against the Jesuits for some supposed insult, he fabricated the existence of a vast Jesuit conspiracy, which aimed at assassinating Charles II. and placing the Papist Duke of York (James II.) on the throne. Certain discoveries of treasonable letters seemed to confirm his accusations. 'Five peers were sent to the Tower, and two thousand suspected persons were hurried to prison.' Oates even charged the Queen herself with knowledge of the plot to murder her husband. The accused peers were ordered to be impeached, and every Catholic in the realm to be arrested. 'A series of judicial murders began ... which even now can only be remembered with horror' (Green, ix. 4). For the trial of Titus Oates and his terrible fate (1685) see Macaulay's *Hist.* ii. 4. Oates even accused Milton (in his *True Narrative of the Horrid Plot* etc., 1679), of having been a 'known frequenter of a Popish Club.'

**1. 7. Rye-house Plot.** After the 'Popish Plot' great excitement existed against the Papists, nearly resulting in civil war. [The names 'Whig' and 'Tory' originated about 1680. 'Whig' is an abbreviation of 'Whigamore,' a nick-name of Scotch peasants, said to be derived from the 'Whiggam' by which they encouraged their horses. It thus means 'a covenanting rebel.' A 'Tory' means an Irish brigand.] The Whigs were led by the Earl of Shaftesbury, who favoured the exclusion of James from the throne and upheld the claims of the ill-fated Duke of Monmouth, illegitimate son of Charles II. [Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* represents Monmouth and his evil counsellor, Shaftesbury.] In 1681 there was a great 'Tory reaction,' with impeachments and executions of Whigs, and Shaftesbury fled to Holland. In 1683 some of Shaftesbury's partisans formed a plot

to seize and probably to murder Charles and James at the Rye-house (on the Lea, in Hertfordshire), on their return from Newmarket. The plot failed, as the royal party returned earlier than was expected, and several of the conspirators were taken and executed. Impeachments ensued. The Earl of Essex committed suicide in prison. Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney were beheaded [Gardiner]. The University of Oxford, on the very day on which Russell was put to death, ordered the political works of Buchanan, Milton, and Baxter to be publicly burned in the court of the Schools (Macaulay's *Hist.*, ch. ii.).

I. 11. Anthony à Wood (1632-1695) wrote the *Athenæ Oxonienses*, 'an exact history of all the writers who have had their education in the University of Oxford; to which are added the *Fasti*, or *Annals*, of the said University.' Milton seems to have taken a Master's Degree also at Oxford (1635), and Wood gives in his *Fasti* (published 1674, the year of Milton's death), a full list of Milton's works and a biographical notice, furnished mainly by Aubrey, an acquaintance of the poet. 'These, I think' (adds Wood), 'are all the things he hath yet extant; those that are not are—a Body of Divinity, which my friend (Aubrey) calls Idea Theologie, now, or at least lately, in the hands of the author's acquaintance called Cyriack Skinner, living in Mark Lane, London, and the Latin Thesaurus, in those of Edward Phillips, his nephew.'

John Toland (1670-1722) in his *Life of Milton* (published 1698) says: 'He wrote likewise a *System of Divinity*, but whether intended for public view or collected merely for his own use, I cannot determine. It was in the hands of his friend, Cyriack Skinner, and where at present is uncertain.' Thus the error as regards the two Skinners was repeated and perpetuated.

I. 12. Cyriack Skinner (or Skynner), son of William Skinner, was the grandson on his father's side of Sir Vincent Skinner, and on his mother's side of Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice of England under James I., one of the chief authors of the Petition of Right, 'a narrow minded and bitter tempered man, but of the highest eminence as a lawyer' (Green). To Cyriack, his favourite pupil and devoted friend, Milton addressed two sonnets. The latter of these, written three years after the loss of his sight, contains an allusion to his *Defensio pro populo*, and was probably on this account not published till twenty years after his death. Wood tells us that 'Cyriack Skinner, an ingenious young gentleman and scholar to John Milton,' was one of the leading members of an anti-monarchical 'Club of Commonwealth's men,' which met in 1659 (the year after the Restoration) at the Turk's Head, New Palace Yard, Westminster.

I. 17. the Oxford parliament was the third of the 'Short Parliaments' summoned by Charles II. between 1679 and 1681,

while the Whig party under Shaftesbury was supreme. The sudden Tory reaction that followed the dissolution of the Oxford parliament was due to the fact that 'much as the nation disliked the idea of having a Popish king, it disliked the idea of civil war still more, and rallied round Charles' (*Gardiner*). See above on 'Rye-house Plot.'

**Page 2, l. 3. Mr. Sumner:** the Rev. Charles Richard Sumner, at that time Chaplain and Keeper of the King's (George IV.) Library at Windsor, and afterwards Bishop of Winchester. He edited the Latin version (printed at the Cambridge University Press), and in the same year (1825) published his translation.

**l. 15. prize essays.** Macaulay felt, or perhaps affected more than he felt, in his earlier years a great contempt for all academical prize compositions. As an undergraduate he twice won the Chancellor's Medal for English verse, and was at the time much elated at his success, though a few years afterwards he asserted that 'the world is pretty well agreed in thinking that the shorter a prize poem is, the better.' He also gained a Craven Scholarship at the same time as George Long. Without unusual proficiency in classical composition he never could have won a place—*quamvis longo intervallo*—in competition with such a consummate scholar. (How grateful is the writer for this opportunity of offering a word of homage to the memory of his old master!) But he hated the ordinary method of 'reading for composition,' and 'collecting tips.'<sup>1</sup> He 'detested the labour of manufacturing Greek and Latin verse in cold blood as an exercise; and his Hexameters were never up to the best Etonian mark, nor his Lambics to the highest standard of Shrewsbury. He defined a scholar as one who reads Plato with his feet on the fender. When already well on in his third year (at college) he writes: "I never practised composition a single hour since I have been at Cambridge" (*Trevelyan*). Later in life he seems to have modified his views somewhat—or possibly, as was not seldom the case, the views modified themselves for the occasion. In his defence of competitive examination for the India Civil Service (1853) he says: 'If, instead of learning Greek, we learned the Cherokee, the man who understood Cherokee best, who made the most correct and melodious Cherokee verses, who comprehended most accurately the effect of the Cherokee particles, would generally be a superior man to him who was destitute of these accomplishments.' And again: 'Skill in Greek and Latin versification has indeed no direct tendency to form a judge, a financier, or a diplomatist. But the youth who does best what all the ablest and most ambitious youths about him are trying to do well will generally prove a superior man.'

<sup>1</sup> Of Milton too Mr. Pattison says: 'His notes (on classical authors) are .. never of mere verbal expression. There is no trace of any intention to store up either the imagery or the language of poetry.'

l. 19. **Pharisees**: the allusion is to *St. Matt.* xxiii. 26 sq.

l. 20. **Cicero** (106-43 B.C.) was the greatest Roman master of the rhetorical style. His oratory does not carry one away, as does that of the Greek Demosthenes, by its sincerity and moral force, but exercises a wonderful attraction by its brilliancy. From purely literary and oratorical standpoints Macaulay may almost be regarded as the 'English Cicero.' In his Diary (Dec. 1855) he writes of Cicero: 'What a man he was! To think that (these three books) should have been the fruits of his leisure during the few months that he outlived the death of Caesar! During those months Cicero was leader of the Senate, and as busy a man as any in the republic. ... He seems to have been at the head of the minds of *second order*. Again (1858): 'I walked in the garden and read Cicero's speeches. ... The egotism is perfectly intolerable. I know nothing like it in literature. The man's self-importance amounted to a monomania. To me the speeches, tried by the standard of English forensic eloquence, seem very bad. They have no tendency to gain a verdict. They are fine lectures, fine declamations, excellent for Exeter Hall or the Music Room at Edinburgh. But in Macaulay's opinion, style was almost the one thing needful in literature, so that it is not surprising that 'soak your mind in Cicero' was his constant advice to students (of Latin prose).' (*Trevelyan*.)

l. 24. **Quintilian**. The line is from Sonnet xi., 'On the detractions which followed upon my writing certain treatises'—perhaps the one of Milton's sonnets which could best be spared. It is a rather ponderous attempt to be humorous at the expense of the unlearned who might be unable to understand the word 'Tetrachordon.' Johnson remarks that Milton was 'a Lion that had no skill in dandling the kid.' One might add that he was something like his own 'unwieldy elephant,' who 'To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed His lithe proboscis' (see *P.L.* iv. 343 sq.). Addison also expresses regret at the forced 'pleasantry' of certain passages in the *Paradise Lost* (e.g. vi. 609 sq.). Still more does Mr. Pattison regret the 'abuse, ... rude railing, and insolent swagger' of some of Milton's political diatribes.

Quintilian (b. 40 A.D. in Spain) studied jurisprudence and rhetoric at Rome. He lived during the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. 'As a teacher of eloquence he bore away the palm from all rivals, and associated his name with pre-eminence in the art.' Among his pupils was the younger Pliny. He was the first Roman that filled the post of a paid official Instructor, and was invested with the Consular title. His great work is a complete system of rhetoric in 12 books, entitled 'De Institutione Oratoria' (On rhetorical education). In style and diction he accepted Cicero as his model.

l. 29. **Sir John Denham**, a contemporary of Milton (1615-1668),

a poet and court official, wrote a tragedy *Sophy*, which made a great sensation, and a contemplative poem (lauded by Dryden as an ‘epic’) called ‘Cooper’s Hill.’ The passage alluded to is from his ‘Death and Burial of Mr. Abraham Cowley’:

Horace’s wit and Virgil’s state  
He did not steal, but emulate;  
And when he would like them appear,  
Their garb and not their clothes did wear.

In his earlier *Criticism on Dante* (see *Remarks*), Macaulay applies the same metaphor to Alfieri, the modern Italian dramatist. ‘It must be acknowledged,’ he says, ‘that this eminent writer has sometimes pushed too far his idolatry for Dante. To borrow a sprightly illustration from Sir John Denham, he has not only imitated his garb, but borrowed his clothes.’

1. 29. Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), was, till eclipsed by Dryden, the most admired poet of Milton’s age. His precocity rivals that of Pope or Macaulay—almost that of Goethe. His first volume of verse, *Poetical Blossoms*, was published in his fifteenth year. At Westminster School, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, he composed plays, including a Latin comedy. Ejected from Cambridge, he migrated to St. John’s College, Oxford, whence he launched satires against the Puritans. Later we find him in Paris, as the secretary of Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I. Here he remained for some years, but shortly before the death of Cromwell he returned to London, and remained in retirement until the Restoration, devoting himself to literature and science, especially botany. His political tendencies were royalist, but his religious and moral views tended in a direction diametrically opposed to that of the Court—hence probably the ill-favour with which he was regarded by king and courtiers. He praised solitude and peace of mind, and expressed the longing ‘to retire himself to some of the American plantations, and forsake this world for ever.’ It is said that whenever a woman entered the room he left it. He wrote many English Odes, and Essays and translations from Roman authors, besides a work of six books in Latin verse (*Plantarum Libri vi.*). Macaulay wrote for Charles Knight’s *Quarterly Magazine* (1824) a ‘Conversation between Mr. Abraham Cowley and Mr. John Milton touching the great Civil War,’ which remained ‘his own decided favourite among his earlier efforts’ (*Trevelyan*). Many of the views expressed in it are restated in the present Essay.

1. 32. *emancipated*. The Latin word *manceps* means literally ‘one who takes in hand,’ or ‘one who lays hold of with his hand, i.e. ‘one who acquires property, e.g. a slave (*mancipium*).’ Hence *emancipatio* is the formal renunciation of one’s rights of property in a person or a thing, and a slave is said to be ‘emancipated’ when his owner renounces his right to regard him as his chattel.

l. 35. **digest**: lit. ‘something arranged in order.’ The ‘*Digesta*’ or ‘*Pandects*’ were a collection of legal precedents in 50 books compiled under the supervision of the Emperor Justinian, as a supplement to the *Justinian Code*.

**Page 3, l. 3. heterodox**: lit. merely ‘thinking otherwise’; i.e. not orthodox, or ‘thinking aright.’ Similarly ‘heresy’ means merely ‘choice,’ i.e. exercise of private judgment. As to Milton’s heterodox opinions, see on p. 1, preliminary note.

l. 5. **Arius** was an Alexandrian priest, educated at Antioch. He began to disseminate his doctrines on the nature of Christ in 313 A.D. The great Schism which ensued was temporarily patched by the Council of Nicæa (328 A.D.), at which the Athanasian party effected the condemnation of the Arian tenets. But the feud still continued to rage, and it was not till after the death of Arius that it was practically ended by the Council of Constantinople (336 A.D.).

l. 8. **the history of his life.** For Milton’s conduct with regard to his first wife, see Stopford Brooke’s *Milton*, pp. 41, 42, 47, or Pattison’s *Milton*, chap. v. He certainly, both in his *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, and in his four *Divorce Tractates*, written thirty years before, advocates and attempts to prove from Scripture the dissolubility of marriage on grounds of ‘incompatibility,’ but there is nothing in the history of his life which might lead one to suspect (though Macaulay seems to insinuate it) any inclination towards the practice of polygamy, in spite of the assertion in the *Treatise* that, having been allowed in the case of the Patriarchs, it cannot be regarded as a crime. The only other passage in which Milton touches upon polygamy is in his *History of England* (about 1650), where he calls it ‘not unnatural,’ but allows that it is ‘licentious.’ Without defending Milton’s conduct or views as regards the ‘fair defect of nature’—views which were due to his religious convictions, and were doubtless hardened and deepened by domestic unhappiness—I am inclined to agree with Mr. Stopford Brooke that ‘it has been too much forgotten how he loved and honoured women.’ Who can read his sonnet to his second wife, the *Comus*, the Italian sonnets, or the description of Adam’s love for Eve, without feeling that Milton was capable of the deepest love and reverence for woman, and that his soul yearned for that loving sympathy and companionship which he calls ‘the gentlest bond of marriage,’ and which, except for a few months, was denied to him? The following comments seem to leave this fact too much out of account. ‘What we know of Milton’s character in domestic relations is that he was severe and arbitrary. His family consisted of women, and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinates and inferior beings. That his own daughters might

not break the ranks, he suffered them to be depressed by a mean and penurious education. He thought woman made only for obedience and man only for rebellion' (*Dr. Johnson*). 'With Milton, as with the whole Calvinistic and Puritan Europe, woman was a creature of an inferior and subordinate class. Man was the final cause of God's creation, and woman was there to minister to this nobler being ... The Puritan had thrown off chivalry as being parcel of Catholicism, and had replaced it by the Hebrew ideal of the subjection and seclusion of woman. ... This oriental hypothesis he modifies by laying more stress on mutual affection, the charities of home, and the intercommunion of intellectual and moral life' (*Pattison*). The oft quoted diatribe of Adam (*P.L.* x. 867 *sq.*) as well as the passage in *Samson* (1010 *sq.*) are of course dramatic. The following passages may also be consulted, *P.L.* iv. 295, 635; viii. 540; ix. 1182; x. 145; xi. 614.

l. 11. **eternity of matter** ... **Sabbath**: see on p. 1, preliminary note.

l. 18. **quartos**. Mr. Sumner's 'edition of the original Latin appeared in the form of a handsome quarto volume' (Masson).

l. 19. **Defensio Populi**. See on p. 41, l. 18.

l. 22. **For a month or so** .... One is forcibly reminded of what Macaulay, some sixteen years later (1841), said about his own *History*: 'I shall not be satisfied, unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the table of young ladies.'

l. 29. **Capuchins**: the order was founded in 1525 by Pater Matteo di Bassi. The Capuchins wear a brown habit with a peaked cowl (*cappuccio*).

l. 36. **something of his moral** ... It is only fair to Macaulay to remember that in this Essay he does not profess to give a full account or criticism of Milton's poetry, nor of his life. He merely selects a few traits and presents them in brilliant colours, bringing them into greater prominence by contrast. As with certain painters, there is an almost entire absence of perspective and *chiaroscuro*.

**Page 4, l. 6. the martyr of** .... The word 'martyr' (Gk. *μάρτυς*) meant originally merely 'a witness.' Later it came to mean 'one who witnesses by suffering for his faith.' The word (as Germ. *Marter*, 'torture') is now-a-days especially connected with the idea of suffering—sometimes merely in this sense, as 'a martyr to toothache,' etc. By 'a martyr of liberty,' Macaulay means 'one who witnessed and suffered for liberty.'

l. 16. **those great men** ... Such as Homer and Æschylus, and perhaps the old Greek sculptors. But we cannot be sure whether they were so entirely 'destitute of models.'

l. 25. **paradoxical**: lit. 'beyond, or contrary to, what appears true,' i.e. apparently absurd. The expression 'to appear paradoxical,' therefore contains a repetition (tautology).

l. 29. **an age too late**. In his notes to Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, Mr. Matth. Arnold says, 'The reference is to what Milton says in his tract, *The Reason of Church Government*,' and he quotes from that tract the words, 'If that there be nothing adverse in our climate, or the fate of this age.' But Johnson and Macaulay of course refer not to this passage but to the well-known lines (*P.L.* ix. 44):

unless an age too late, or cold  
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing.

Johnson's 'clumsy ridicule' is as follows: 'There prevailed in his time an opinion that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of nature ... Milton appears to suspect that souls partake of the general degeneracy, and it is not without some fear that his book is to be written in an *age too late* for heroic poetry. Another opinion wanders about the world, and sometimes finds reception among wise men; an opinion that restrains the operations of the mind to particular regions, and supposes that a luckless mortal may be born in a degree of latitude too high or too low for wisdom or for wit. From this fancy, wild as it is, he had not wholly cleared his head, when he feared lest the *climate* of his country might be *too cold* for flights of imagination.' Johnson also derides as due to the 'fumes of vain imagination' the assertion of Milton that he found certain seasons of the year more favourable than others to poetic composition.

**Page 5, l. 9. the earliest poets . . .** Of Homer this may be true. But such exceptions as Shakspeare, Milton, Dante, Goethe, and Browning may give us pause before we subscribe to Macaulay's 'most orthodox article.' It may indeed be impossible for the nineteenth century to produce a Homer, but it would have been, to say the least, quite as impossible for Homer's age to produce a Shakespeare or a Goethe. We cannot create a Laocoon or a Venus of Milo, but could the age of Pericles have created a ninth Symphony or a Tannhäuser?

l. 11. **phænomenon**, or **phenomenon**, lit. 'a thing that appears,' i.e. something of which the mind takes cognisance; but in ordinary language it generally means something which excites one to discover its cause.

l. 14. **imitative arts**. Plato certainly defines art as 'imitation,' and tells us that a work of art is 'twice removed from the object as it was created,' because the phenomenon itself is only a picture of the 'idea'—of that which, as Carlyle says, 'lies at the bottom of appearance.' But although art uses imitation as a

means, it is creative and not merely imitative. Macaulay gets out of his depth when, as in the following disquisition, he attempts to philosophise. One can only flounder along after him, and trust to one's swimming powers when foothold fails. It would be a fairly interesting but a profitless task to analyse his argument, and show where his premisses are false and his conclusions illogical. The whole is founded on a false conception of poetry as merely imitative and 'illusive'—and of its end as sensation or amusement.

I. 16. *Ages are spent etc.* ... In his Essay on *Ranke's History of the Popes* Macaulay takes a somewhat similar line when contrasting science and the speculations of natural theology. 'There are,' he says, 'branches of knowledge with respect to which the law of the human mind is progress. In mathematics, when once a proposition has been demonstrated, it is never afterwards contested. ... There is no chance that either in the purely demonstrative, or in the purely experimental sciences, the world will ever go back, or even remain stationary. Nobody ever heard of a reaction against Taylor's theorem, or of a reaction against Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood. But with theology the case is very different. As respects natural religion—revelation being for the present altogether left out of the question—it is not easy to see that a philosopher of the present day is more favourably situated than Thales or Simonides. ... As to the other great question, the question what becomes of man after death, we do not see that a highly-educated European, left to his unassisted reason, is more likely to be in the right than a Blackfoot Indian. Not a single one of the many sciences in which we surpass the Blackfoot Indian throws the smallest light on the state of the soul after the animal life is extinct.' It is, of course, true that poetry does not necessarily flourish with the progress of science; but it is false that it necessarily decays. It stands under other conditions and laws of development.

I. 26. *Mrs. Marct's Conversations on Political Economy* was formerly much in vogue as a text-book for beginners. It contains an exposition in simple language of the doctrines of Adam Smith, Sismondi, and Malthus. 'Every school-girl knows' and 'every school-boy knows,' are formulae in which, with 'their variations, Macaulay possesses an undisputed monopoly. See the first pages of his Essay on *Clive* and *Boswell's Johnson* for instances.

I. 27. **Charles Montague** (afterwards Earl of Halifax), called by Green 'the ablest of English financiers' (of his time), was Chancellor of the Exchequer (1694-9) under William III. With the assistance of Sir Isaac Newton he restored the currency, which had been depreciated by the clipping of coin, and intro-

duced milled edges. He also founded the Bank of England, and started the National Debt.

l. 27. Sir Robert Walpole (afterwards Earl of Orford), called by Green 'the first English Minister who was a great financier,' held office under George I. and George II. He was made First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1721) after the bursting of the South Sea Bubble.

l. 30. Sir Isaac Newton, 'was born at Woolsthorpe, in Lincolnshire, on Christmas Day, in the memorable year (1642) which saw the outbreak of the Civil War. In the year of the Restoration he entered Cambridge. ... At twenty-three he facilitated the calculation of planetary movements by his theory of Fluxions. The optical discoveries to which he was led by his experiments with the prism ... were embodied in the theory of Light which he laid before the Royal Society. ... His discovery of the law of gravitation had been made as early as 1666 ; but the erroneous estimate of the earth's diameter prevented him from disclosing it, and it was not till the eve of the Revolution (1687) that the *Principia* revealed to the world his new theory of the universe.' As far as regards what he calls the 'actual attainments' of mere knowledge Macaulay's statement is possibly correct, but he ignores the fact that all great discoveries, such as those of Newton, Kepler, and Darwin, by which science is forwarded, have been due not to 'analysis' and 'dissection' but to an act of imaginative instinct which is closely related to the creative power of the poet. It should be remembered that while Macaulay wrote these words he was still smarting at the memory of his recent failure to satisfy the Cambridge examiners in mathematics.

l. 34. Whether by **refinement** he means material or intellectual refinement, one feels inclined to object that Pheidias and Sophocles lived at Athens in the age of Pericles, Socrates, and the Sophists ; that Dante was born under the sign of scholastic theology ; that Raphael and Michael Angelo enjoyed the splendid hospitality of the Medicean court and the Vatican, and that Shakespeare was Francis Bacon's contemporary. And as to our own age—to say nothing of Tennyson and Browning—do we not feel that the ever grander revelations of science must surely be material for a still greater than Homer or Shakespeare ?

**Page 6, l. 3. abstract**, i.e. form abstract ideas. The absence of abstract ideas in the native mind and of abstract terms in the language often causes missionaries great difficulties, e.g. in paraphrasing St. Paul.

l. 14. better theories and worse poems. That philosophy and poetic imagination are not always incompatible is amply proved by such cases as those of Plato, Lucretius, Dante, Schiller, and Coleridge.

l. 20. **Shaftesbury**: the third Earl of Shaftesbury, born 1621. His chief work was *Characteristics*, in which he argued that the faculty by which we recognise right and wrong is not the reason, but a special faculty—to this he gave the name ‘moral sense.’

l. 21. **Helvetius** created a sensation in the Parisian world about the middle of the eighteenth century by the promulgation of the doctrine, by no means new, that self-interest is the one motive, and pleasure the one end of humanity, the ideas of wrong and right being what Dr. Johnson would call the ‘fumes of vain imagination.’ His principal work was *De l’Esprit*.

l. 25. **lacrymal glands**: the glands which secrete tears.

**circulation of the blood**: the true theory of the circulation of the blood, though its prior discovery has been claimed for others, is generally supposed to have been first taught by William Harvey in 1619. As an antidote to Macaulay’s dicta let us take Carlyle’s words: ‘Men of letters are a perpetual priesthood, from age to age teaching men that a God is still present in their life; that all appearance, whatsoever we see in the world, is but a vesture for the Divine Idea—for that which lies at the bottom of appearance.’ Even Aristophanes teaches us that ‘as a child has masters to teach him, so the grown-up man has the poets’ (*Ran.* 1054).

l. 26. **Niobe**: daughter of Tantalus, sister of Pelops, and wife of Amphion, king of Thebes. According to Homer she had twelve children, and boasted herself superior to Leto (Latona), who had only two—Apollo and Artemus (Diana). Her children were slain by the arrows of these deities, and she herself was changed into a rock, down whose sides perpetual rills of water flowed. I do not know whether Macaulay had in mind any particular painting. The subject was frequently treated by ancient sculptors. The relics of a group of Niobe and her children may be seen in the Sculpture Gallery of the British Museum.

**Aurora**: the goddess of Dawn. In the Rospigliosi Palace at Rome there is a beautiful painting by Guido Reni of Aurora fitting before the chariot of Phœbus.

l. 31. **Bernard de Mandeville** (1670-1733) was born at Dort, in Holland, but practised as a physician in England, where he published some satires on ‘Hypochondrical Affections’ and medical follies. In 1714 he issued a volume of satirical verse called the *Grumbling Hive*. This reappeared in 1723, under the title *The Fable of the Bees*, with a prose commentary in which he stated in the plainest terms his ideas on the ‘Nature of Society.’ This book, as Prof. Morley finely remarks, was, as it were, the first faint swell before the rising of that mighty wave of thought which has swept across the old landmarks of society. ‘It outraged conventional opinion by working out

an argument that civilisation is based on the vices of society. The bees lived in their hives as men, "millions endeavouring to supply each other's lust and vanity," lawyers, physicians, priests, thriving upon the feuds, follies, and vices of mankind. Luxury employed its million, pride its million; envy stirred men to work. Fickleness of idle fashion was the wheel that kept trade moving. But the hive grumbled at the vice within it, and the knaves turned honest. In half an hour meat fell a penny a pound; masks fell from all faces. The bar was silent, because there were no more frauds; judges, jailers, and Jack Ketch retired, with all their pomp. The number of doctors was reduced, ... Clergy who knew themselves to be unfit for their duty resigned their cures. All lived within their incomes and paid ready money. Glory by war and foreign conquest was laughed at by these honest bees. ... Then followed fall of prices, extinction of trade founded upon luxury and of the commerce that supplied it.' In this state of things, when 'Peace and Plenty reign, and everything is cheap and plain,' the honest bees are ridiculed, insulted, and attacked by more luxurious swarms; but bravely 'fighting for their country's sake, when right or liberty's at stake,' they prove victorious, and finally 'so improved their temperance, that to avoid extravagance, they flew into a hollow tree, blest with content and honesty.'

1. 32. *Iago*: 'Othello,' says Macaulay in his Criticism on Dante (*Miscell. Writings*), 'is perhaps the greatest work in the world. From what does it derive its power? From the clouds? From the ocean? From the mountains? Or from love strong as death, and jealousy cruel as the grave?'

Page 7, l. 1. unsoundness of mind: cf.

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact.

Plato also speaks of the love of ideal beauty as a 'divine madness.' The following paragraphs, in which Macaulay propounds his Magic Lantern and Red Riding Hood theories on the subject of poetry, do not call for serious refutation; they are perhaps the very worst 'pages of criticism on poetry' which he ever wrote—all of which pages he, in later life, professed such a desire to burn.

1. 14. As imagination . . . *Mids.-Night's Dream*, v. 1.

1. 18. *frenzy*: from the Greek *phrenitis* (*φρενῖτις*), 'inflammation of the brain.'

1. 21. *premises*, or *premisses* (Lat. *praemissa*, lit. 'things sent forward'), are propositions, or axioms, the acceptance of which necessitate, in logic at least, the acceptance of a certain conclusion.

**Page 8, l. 3. In a rude state . . .** The argument here is that children are of all people the most imaginative, and that not only does poetic genius flourish best in a rude society, but that we can scarcely 'conceive the effect which poetry produced on our ruder ancestors.' A few months before writing these words, Macaulay, having another task, and being always ready to 'make the worse the better reason,' stated : 'Though a rude state of society is that in which great original works are most frequently produced, it is also that in which they are worst appreciated. This may appear paradoxical ; but it is proved by experience, and is consistent with reason' (*Criticism on Dante*).

**l. 15. Rhapsodists** : professional reciters of poetry. The Greek word possibly meant merely 'song-makers,' but more probably 'song stitchers,' i.e. men who, in early times, strung together old ballads and epic poems into a continuous narrative (such as is found in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*), and itinerant bards who gained a living by reciting such poetry. [Others explain it as 'staff bards,' because they held a staff in their hand while reciting.] Plato's Dialogue *Ion* is a satire on the reciters of his day. 'When you recite finely some epic passage,' says Socrates to Ion, 'and fill your audience with unusual astonishment—whether it be about Odysseus revealing himself to the Suitors, or Achilles rushing at Hector, or some pathetic passage about Andromache or Hecuba or Priam—are you in your right mind, or do you become carried away, and does your soul imagine itself in its ecstasy to be present at the very scene that you are describing?' 'How clearly you have proved it!' exclaims Ion. 'I certainly cannot conceal the fact that when I recite a pathetic passage, my eyes fill with tears, and at anything frightful or awful, my hair stands on end and my heart throbs.' Compare with this the well-known lines in *Hamlet* which contain what can hardly be accidental resemblances :

Is it not monstrous, that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,  
That from her working all his visage wann'd ;  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit?—And all for nothing!  
For Hecuba !  
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her ?

**l. 17. The Mohawk Indians** occupied the region which is now the State of New York, and came into such frequent collision with the early settlers that their name is associated, more than those of other tribes, with the war-path and the scalping-knife.

l. 24. Poetry produces an illusion. This is often stated. Thus Mr. Pattison (*Milton*, p. 183) says 'all poetry is founded on illusion.' And it is, of course, true enough, if by such statements we mean that poetry requires from us an act of imagination. But a work of art is not a realistic imitation ; the 'tricks of strong imagination,' of which Shakespeare speaks, do not 'illude' us as we are illuded by a Pepper's ghost or 'Venice in London.' When gazing at the Madonna di san Sisto, or the Sibylls of Michael Angelo, or the Apollo Belvedere, or listening to and viewing Hamlet or King Lear on the stage, we do not 'require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect.' We accept them as imaginative creations, as artistic realities—*praeternatural* rather than unnatural ; for, as Shakespeare tells us, art 'shares with great creating nature,' and 'adds to nature.' With Macaulay's magic lantern contrast Wordsworth's

The gleam,  
The light that never was on sea or land,  
The consecration, and the poet's dream.

l. 32. We cannot unite etc. This sentence states concisely the 'first suppositions' of Macaulay's 'orthodox poetical creed.' If not every schoolboy, at least every true believer in poetry, knows that the most exquisite enjoyment of imaginative creations *can* be united with the clearest discernment of truth, and that anyone who defines poetry as 'deception,' the end of which is to impose upon childish credulity, and who denies the compatibility of intellectual activity and poetic genius, is talking very great nonsense.

**Page 9, l. 10. We have seen etc.** The reference is to the poets of the Lake school, especially Wordsworth, of whose 'struggle against the spirit of the age' the following lines are an illustration :

Ambitious spirits,  
Whom earth at this late season hath produced  
To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh  
The planets in the hollow of their hand ;  
And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains  
Have solved the elements, or analysed  
The thinking principle ...  
O, there is laughter at their work in heaven !

[In these lines Wordsworth has evidently copied the passage in *Par. Lost* (viii. 72 sq.) where Raphael speaks with disdain of human astronomy :

He his fabric of the heavens  
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move  
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide ....]

Wordsworth revolted against the unnatural ‘poetic diction’ which had been adopted by the imitators of Milton and other versifiers, but which in Milton’s case<sup>1</sup> was a natural form of expression, though styled by Johnson a ‘Babylonish dialect’; he also affirmed that the poet should endeavour to see into ‘the life of things,’ and should turn to Nature and to the ‘essential feelings,’ which are to be found in their purest form among the simple and unsophisticated. Macaulay elsewhere pours the vials of his contempt on Wordsworth and the Lake School: ‘The herd of blue-stocking ladies and sonneteering gentlemen seems to consider a strong sensibility to the *splendour of the grass and the glory of the flower* as an ingredient absolutely indispensable in the formation of a poetic mind ... What is it that we go forth to see in *Hamlet*? Is it a reed shaken with the wind? A small celandine? A bed of daffodils?’ Contrast with this Carlyle’s words, ‘He who in any way shows us better than we knew before, that a lily of the field is beautiful ... he has sung for us, made us sing with him, a little verse of a sacred psalm.’ It is for this, and not for his railings against science, that we owe gratitude to Wordsworth. To us it seems not only nobler, but the mark of greater poetic genius to ‘face the spectres of the mind, and lay them,’ rather than to ‘take to pieces the whole web of the mind’—that proceeding which wins Macaulay’s ‘feeble applause.’ To such as Wordsworth the highest end of science is merely intellectual and sensuous satisfaction. ‘She sets her forward countenance and leaps into the future chance, submitting all things to desire.’ And there is indeed no absolute satisfaction in her teachings. Too often, to apply Milton’s words, ‘the hungry sheep look up and are not fed, but swollen with wind, rot inwardly,’ swollen too with that rotten ‘fodder of fact-knowledge,’ with which, as Plato says, science feeds the horses of the soul-chariot. To her teachings we never surrender ourselves with restful and perfect satisfaction, as we do to much in nature and art. Poetry does not offer us the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but a foretaste of that ‘angels’ bread’ of which Dante speaks.

**I. 17. Rabbinical literature:** commentaries on the Law (Talmud), mystical writings, such as the ‘Cabala,’ etc., composed by Jewish Rabbis, mostly in the early centuries of our era. Milton was also well versed in the Hebrew Bible, a chapter of which, in his later life, was daily read to him.

**I. 21. his Latin verse:** Besides the Elegies, Exercises, and the *Silvarum Liber* of his earlier years, he wrote in Latin Hexameters the *Epistle to Manso*, and the *Epitaphium Damonis* (1639), the

<sup>1</sup>‘It fulfils the ultimate need of a grand style in being the easy and necessary expression of the very character and nature of the man.’ (*Stopford Brooke*).

latter especially of rare beauty. Milton's *Elegies* were translated by the poet Cowper.

1. 22. **Petrarch**: Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) owes his chief celebrity to his two books of Sonnets and Canzoni on the life and death of Laura. They are like exquisitely-chiselled little statuettes, of no real poetic value. In the age of the 'Academies,' the enthusiasm of Italian writers 'poured itself forth in tedious commentaries upon every word of every sonnet' (Hallam). Petrarch also devoted his energies to the revival of classical learning, and wrote much Latin verse. For his Latin epic *Africa*, which treats of the 2nd Punic War, he was crowned with the laurel wreath on the Roman Capitol, and received an offer of the same honour from the University of Paris. Of his Latin Erasmus says, 'He wants full acquaintance with the language, and his whole diction shows the rudeness of the preceding age'; other critics condemn the poem as 'scarcely bearing the character of Latinity'; Hallam adds 'there can be no doubt that his Latin poetry abounds with faults of metre.' In his *Criticism on Petrarch*, written in 1824, Macaulay, while commenting severely on his Latinity, and on the 'dreary obscurity' of the *Africa*, allows that Petrarch is to be commended for having 'gone on the forlorn hope of literature,' and for having 'attempted to revive the finer elegancies of the ancient language of the world.'

1. 25. **Cowley**: see on p. 2, l. 29.

1. 27. **The authority of Johnson**. This is not quite correct. Johnson does indeed say that Milton's *early* Latin compositions—written when at Cambridge—which he calls 'the products of his vernal fertility' and 'first essays,' have been surpassed by many, and particularly by Cowley; but only a few lines later he 'thinks it is true that Milton was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classic elegance.' Again, when discussing Milton's 'literature,' he states that, 'In Latin his skill was such as places him in the first rank of writers and critics.'

1. 30. **Augustan**: the age of Augustus (roughly speaking, from 44 B.C. to 15 A.D.) is looked upon as the golden age of Latinity. The most celebrated writers of this age were Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Livy, and Cicero (d. 43 B.C.). The real name of Augustus (which is only a title) was Caius Octavius. He was adopted by his great-uncle, C. Julius Cæsar, and assumed the name C. Julius Cæsar Octavianus. He attained full imperial powers on the death of Lepidus, 12 B.C.

1. 33. **exotic**: foreign, alien, used especially in botany. The Greek *ξωτικός* is only found in ecclesiastical writers, and means 'heathen.' Of Petrarch's Latin verses Macaulay writes: 'They

must be considered as exotics, transplanted to a foreign climate' (*Criticism on Petrarch*).

**Page 10, l. 1. flower pots... oaks**: probably a reminiscence of Goethe's celebrated remark about Hamlet in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (publ. 1795), 'Here we have an oak-tree planted in a costly vessel which should have received into its lap only lovely flowers; the roots spread, the vessel is shattered.' Although in 1825 Macaulay could not have read *Wilhelm Meister* in the original, as he began German on his voyage from India in 1838, he doubtless had seen translations. In one of the first letters written on his arrival in London (June, 1838) he says, 'Such books as Lessing's *Laocoön*, such passages as the criticism on Hamlet in *Wilhelm Meister*, fill me with wonder and despair.'

**1. 3. Manso**: Giov. Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, was 'for two generations the Mæcenas of Southern Italy.' He had been the patron of Tasso, when the poor half insane poet in his wanderings (see on p. 23, l. 27) came to Naples. In his house Tasso's *Gerusalemme Conquistata* was finished, and he is mentioned by Tasso in the poem. When Milton was on the road from Rome to Naples he met an Eremite Friar who gave him an introduction to Manso. 'In spite of his 78 years,' says Pattison, he was able to act as cicerone to the young Englishman over the scenes which he himself, in his *Life of Tasso*, has described with the enthusiasm of a poet. But even the high-souled Manso quailed before the terrors of the Inquisition, and apologised to Milton for not having shown him greater attention, because he (Milton) would not be more circumspect in the matter of religion.' The *Epistle to Manso* was written in Latin Hexameters, and was published with his early poems in 1645.

**1. 13. About him ... P.L. iv. 551.**

**1. 19. panoply**: lit. the full suit of armour of a  $\delta\pi\lambda\iota\tau\eta\varsigma$  (heavy-armed Greek warrior).

**1. 30. parodist**: lit. one who 'sings a song with certain changes.' Macaulay probably alludes especially to Dryden's *State of Innocence*. See on p. 11, l. 36.

**Page 11, l. 3. The most striking characteristic ...** This criticism is true, and obvious. It is stated and illustrated here with great brilliance. One of Milton's latest biographers says, 'Milton's diction is the elaborated outcome of all the best words of all antecedent poetry. Words, over and above their dictionary signification, connote all the feeling which has gathered round them through a hundred generations of song. ... The poet suggests much more than he says, or as Milton himself has phrased it, "more is meant than meets the ear." ... For the purposes of poetry a thought is the representative of many feelings, and a word is the representative of many thoughts.'

A single word may thus set in motion in us the vibration of a feeling first consigned to letters 3000 years ago.... Milton's secret lies in his mastery over the rich treasure of this inherited vocabulary' (*Pattison*).

l. 14. unless the mind of the reader ... 'Only a small fraction of the men, and still a smaller fraction of the women (of the educated classes), fully apprehend the meaning of words.... When we pass to a style of which the effect depends on the suggestion of collateral associations, we leave behind the majority even of these few. This is what is meant by the standing charge against Milton, that he is too learned. ... To follow Milton one should at least have tasted the same training through which he put himself' (*Pattison*).

l. 18. key-note ... It would be of course quite impossible to 'make out the melody' if one were only given the key-note. Would it be possible even in the case of a single chord?

l. 30. synonymous words are different words with the same meaning; homonymous words are identical words with different meanings. In Greek 'synonymous words' also mean the names of things belonging to the same genus: thus *man* and *ox* would be synonyms, as they both are *animals*.

l. 36. Sesame: 'Sesam' is said to mean, in some Oriental language, 'Open!' Cassim confounded it with the 'sesam' or 'sesame' (*sesamum Indicum*), the seed of a capsule-bearing plant (one of the *Pedaliaceæ*), which is much used in the East and in Africa, especially for making oil. The ancient Egyptians strewed their cakes with sesam-seed.

For the life and writings of John Dryden (1631-1700) see any English Literature Primer. 'The State of Innocence and the Fall of Man,' says Johnson, in his *Life of Dryden*, 'is termed by him an opera: it is rather a tragedy in heroic rhyme, but of which the personages are such as cannot decently be exhibited on the stage.' Dryden and Davenant had already 'improved' Shakespeare's *Tempest* for stage purposes. In 1673 Dryden 'wrote to Milton to have leave to put his *Paradise Lost* into a drama in rhyme. Mr. Milton received him civilly, and told him that he would give him leave to tag his verses' (*Aubrey*). Tags were ornamental metal points or balls appended to the cords or laces of a dress. Extracts from the play are given by Prof. Masson (vi., p. 710).

Page 12, l. 6. muster-rolls of names... The longest of these muster-rolls are—as might be expected—those of the lands which Adam might have seen in prophetic vision, but did not see, from the hill of Paradise (*P.L.* xi.), and the still longer list of those beheld by Christ from the 'exceeding high mountain' (*P.R.* iii.).

Virgil possesses the same art of impressing one by sonorous names and geographical associations :

...‘flerunt Rhodopeiæ arces  
Altaque Pangæa, et Rhesi Mavortia tellus,  
Atque Getæ atque Hebrus et Actias Orithyia.’  
‘ille flagranti  
Aut Athon, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo  
Dejicit.’  
‘Glauco et Panopeæ, et Inoo Melicertæ.’

1. 18. **trophied lists** : I suppose he means the lists at a tournament decorated with the trophies taken from the vanquished.

1. 19. **housings** : trappings.

**devices** : probably the devices on the shields of the knights.

1. 23. **Allegro and Pensero**. Mr. Pattison says : ‘Milton was probably in the early stage of acquiring the language when he superscribed these poems with their Italian titles. For there is no such word as *Pensero*, the adjective formed from *Pensiero* being *pensieroso*. Even had the word been written correctly, its signification is not that which Milton intended, viz. thoughtful or contemplative, but anxious.’ It seems strange that, if this be so, the only English poet (for Rossetti hardly counts) who has written Italian verse praised by Italians should have let the title stand when publishing the poem some thirteen years after its composition. Those who will consult any really good Italian dictionary (such as *Michaelis* or the *Grande*), will find the form ‘pensero,’ and discover that the primary (if not the modern colloquial) meaning of the adjective is ‘pensive’ and not ‘anxious.’ Milton evidently chose this form as more melodious.

Dr. Johnson’s account of and criticisms on these two poems are good and appreciative. See also Mr. Stopford Brooke’s *Milton* (pp. 18, 19), and Mr. Pattison’s *Milton* (pp. 23-29).

1. 31. **stanza** : in the original version of the Essay Macaulay wrote ‘Canto.’ The exaggeration is quite enough as it now stands.

1. 32. **Comus** : ‘Ths name *Comus* was given to this masque after Milton’s death’ (*Stopford Brooke*). Comus, the Lord of Revelry, is not a classical personage. The work in Greek means ‘revelry,’ and possibly ‘comedy’ means the ‘song of revel,’ although others say it means ‘the village song,’ as comic representations were first given in villages. For criticisms on *Comus* consult Mr. Stopford Brooke (pp. 21-24), and Mr. Pattison (pp. 21-23). According to Mr. Skeat the word *masque* or *mask* is derived from the Arabic *mashkarat*, ‘a buffoon or jester’; and thus ‘the sense of entertainment is the true one, the use of the visor at such entertainments being (from an etymological point

of view), an accident.' In German *Maske* means a masque, a masker, or a fancy-dress ('domino'), while the 'visor' is generally called a 'Larve' (Lat. *larva*) or Gesichts-maske.

I. 32. *Samson Agonistes*: 'Samson the Wrestler.' See Stopford Brooke's *Milton* (pp. 128-167).

I. 34. *lyric poems* . . . : Of *Comus* Dr. Johnson says: 'As a drama it is deficient . . . The songs are numerous, and full of imagery; but they are harsh in their diction, and not very musical in their numbers . . . It is a drama in the epic style (!), inelegantly splendid, and tediously instructive.' Mr. Stopford Brooke quotes the words of Sir Henry Wotton, cited also by Macaulay: 'I should much commend the tragical part (*i.e.* the blank verse), if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Doric delicacy in your songs and odes'; but he remarks: 'It is not in the lyrics, which are excelled by many of the Elizabethan lyrics, but in the full-weighted dignity of the blank verse that the poem was then unparalleled.'

*Samson Agonistes* Dr. Johnson dismissed with the curt remark that it is a 'tragedy written in imitation of the Ancients, and never designed by the author for the stage.' 'In reading it,' says Prof. Masson, 'not Shakespeare, nor Ben Jonson, nor Massinger must be thought of, but Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.' Mr. Stopford Brooke calls it an 'unexpected resurrection,' and a 'last expression, born out of due time, of the Elizabethan Tragedy,' and Mr. Pattison says, 'He had not the dramatist's imagination . . . Macaulay has truly said that Milton's genius is lyrical, not dramatic.' There seems, therefore, considerable divergence of opinion on the subject. Green (viii. *ad fin.*) tells us that it is 'to Milton's Puritan deficiency in human sympathy that we must attribute his wonderful want of dramatic genius.' In calling *Samson* a 'lyrical poem,' and blaming Milton for not making it, as he made the *Comus*, 'essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance,' Macaulay shows how narrow his ideas were on the subject of the drama. Limiting as he does dramatic action to the mere development of external events leading up to a material 'catastrophe,' he may be classed with the detractors of such a play as Goethe's *Iphigenie*, as being no drama but merely 'psychology in a dramatic disguise.' Surely the development of feeling and character in the *Prometheus*, the *Eumenides*, and *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, or in the *Iphigenie* of Goethe, is no less 'dramatic action' than the development of events in a sensational play or novel. Lyric poetry is properly poetry sung to the lyre. It may be 'subjective'—where the poet 'attracts notice to his personal feelings'—or it may present deep feelings and truths in an universal and purely 'objective' form. In 'dramatic lyrics' again (such as those of Browning), the feelings of a certain person, but not of the poet, are expressed.

Subjectivity is of course fatal to dramatic representation, as we see in the case of Byron; and *Samson Agonistes* is doubtless too subjective, and is undramatic. But to exclude from the drama all lyrical elements would be to rob it of its highest function. To condemn the *Prometheus* or the *Agamemnon* as undramatic because of their lyric element would be like condemning *Hamlet* on account of the soliloquies.

**Page 13, l. 6.** tragedies of Byron: such as *Marino Faliero*, *The Two Foscari*, and *Manfred*. In his essay on Byron (1830) Macaulay says: 'It is hardly too much to say that Lord Byron could exhibit only one man, and only one woman—a man proud, moody, cynical, ... a woman all softness and gentleness, but capable of being transformed by passion into a tigress ... Even these two characters, his only two, he could not exhibit dramatically.' In his *Essays in Criticism* Matthew Arnold quotes and seemingly approves the following verdict by M. Scherer: 'Byron has treated hardly any subject but one—himself; now the man, in Byron, is of a nature even less sincere than the poet. This beautiful and blighted being is at bottom a coxcomb. He posed all his life long.'

l. 13. **Harold**, i.e. Childe Harold.

l. 16. his own emotions: This is true of a certain class of lyric poetry, but absolutely untrue of Æschylus, whom Macaulay now proceeds to define as 'head and heart, a lyric poet,' and leads us to suppose that he, like Byron, could only exhibit 'a single movable head.'

l. 21. **sprang from the Ode**. According to Dr. Donaldson (*Theatre of the Greeks*), the *choral* portions of the Attic Drama were an offspring of the old dances (Chori) and Bacchic hymns ('Tragedy' meaning the song of the Satyrs, and 'Comedy' the song of the Revellers). But he asserts that the Athenian dramatists accepted as the model for their *dialogue* the declamations of the Rhapsodists, who recited Homer and other epics, and old Iambic poems. Thespis (about 540 B.C.) first introduced an actor into the choric performances; Æschylus added a second, and Sophocles a third.

l. 25. **Æschylus**: was born at Eleusis in Attica in 525 B.C. He fought at Marathon and possibly at Salamis. In 468 B.C. he was defeated by his younger rival Sophocles, and is said to have left Athens in disgust and to have gone to the court of Hiero, tyrant of Syracuse. He died at Gela in Sicily in 456 B.C.—killed, it is said, by a tortoise, which an eagle let fall upon his head. He wrote seventy plays, of which five are extant—among them the only Greek 'Trilogy' that we possess, i.e. the three plays *Agamemnon*, *Choëphoroe*, and *Eumenides* (the 'Oresteia,' or story of Orestes). The *Agamemnon* has been translated by the poet Browning.

In the *Persæ* Æschylus describes the battle of Salamis. In grandeur of imagination, especially in the delineation of the terrible, and in grandeur of style he is perhaps equalled by no poet. Paley speaks of the 'Oriental figurativeness of his expressions,' and says: 'He appears to have borrowed some of his imagery and phraseology from the Persians, and his fondness for strange and portentous forms, the types of which may be traced in many Assyrian sculptures.'

**I. 31. Herodotus:** the 'father of history' (b. 484 at Halicarnassus in Asia Minor), was a contemporary of Sophocles and Thucydides. His history, written in Ionic Greek, describes the struggle between Asiatic and Hellenic civilisation. He visited Babylon and Egypt, and gives graphic accounts of Oriental lands and customs.

**I. 35. Pindar:** the 'Theban eagle' (b. about 522 B.C. at Thebes), was the greatest lyric poet of Greece. He wrote a vast quantity of odes, hymns, dirges, pæans, etc., of which only the 'Epinicia' (Songs of Victory) are extant. They commemorate the victors in the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian games. Gray is the only poet who has attained any success in imitating Pindar.

**Page 14, l. 3. as plays, his works are absurd.** One of Macaulay's dabs of crude colour. It is true that the action seems at times to the modern reader to be impeded by long choral songs, but of all dramatists Æschylus might have best been selected by Macaulay to illustrate his remarks about the little girl feeling the teeth of the monster at her throat. 'Terror is his element,' says Schlegel, ... 'he holds up a Medusa's head before the petrified spectators.' Whether Macaulay ever formally retracted this dictum I do not know, but such words as the following seem to at least point in that direction: 'My admiration for Æschylus has been prodigiously increased. I cannot conceive how any person of the smallest pretension to taste should doubt about his immeasurable superiority to every poet of antiquity, Homer only excepted. ... It is quite unintelligible to me that the ancient critics should have placed him so low' (*Letter from Calcutta, 1834*).

**I. 5. address of Clytæmnestra.** She and the king exchange greetings in speeches of about 50 lines apiece, and Agamemnon (banteringly, says Paley) remarks, 'thou hast made a long speech, suitably to the length of my absence.' It must, however, be remembered that the Athenian audience knew full well the terrible catastrophe that was to follow, and probably the 'tragic irony' of suspense had a far stronger dramatic effect on them than it has on the bustling, impatient modern mind. Suspended motion is the characteristic of sculpture, and Greek drama is sculpturesque.

l. 6. **seven Argive chiefs:** After the death of (Edipus, his sons Polynices and Eteocles, whom he had cursed, shared the government of Thebes. Polynices was expelled by his brother, and was accompanied by Adrastus, king of Argos, and five other heroes in the expedition of the *Seven against Thebes* (the title of the play). The two brothers slew each other in combat. The command of Creon that the body of Polynices should lie unburied was violated by Antigone—whose fate is told us by Sophocles. Ten years later Adrastus led the sons of the fallen heroes (the 'Eponi') against Thebes, and razed it to the ground.

l. 10. **Sophocles** (born at Colonus, near Athens, 495 B.C.; died 406 B.C., in his 90th year) is said to have written 130 plays, of which seven are extant. Instead of the workings of that inexorable Destiny which rules in the dramas of Aeschylus, we find in Sophocles (though Nemesis and Ate are not absent from his plays) the tragic effects of human passions and weakness; but he never exhibits these passions and sufferings, as does Euripides, for merely sensational purposes. His portraiture is more ideal than that of Euripides, who sometimes descends to a coarse realism. 'Euripides exhibits men as they are,' he is said to have remarked, 'but I exhibit them as they ought to be.' No poet, not even Shakespeare, has given us truer, nobler, and more affecting delineations of human character. Macaulay seems to mean that the conditions imposed on Greek drama by its choral nature made an illusive realism impossible for the poet. But it is not easy to follow his argument.

l. 15. **Euripides**: probably born at Salamis on the day of the battle (480 B.C.), was a pupil of Anaxagoras and a friend of Socrates, who is said to have helped him in composing some of his plays. His first tragedy was exhibited in 455 B.C., and he continued to write plays for nearly fifty years. Possibly on account of unpopularity caused by his free-thought and by the attacks of Aristophanes, he left Athens when an old man, and died at the court of Archelaus, king of Macedonia (406 B.C.). It is said that he was torn to pieces by the king's dogs. Of his eighteen extant plays the best are perhaps the *Alcestis*, *Medea*, and the two *Iphigenias*. In his lively *Scenes from Athenian Rerels*, written for *Knight's Magazine* (1824), Macaulay ridicules and parodies Euripides. Of the *Perse*, the most lyric of all the plays of Aeschylus—which Macaulay here, a few months later, for the sake of his argument condemns as dramatic monstrosities—Callidemus, the *laudator temporis acti* of the *Scenes*, says: 'If you had seen it acted!—The whole theatre frantic with joy, stamping, shouting, laughing, crying. There was Cynægirus, the brother of Eschylus, who had lost both his arms at Marathon, beating the stumps against his sides with rapture.'

l. 18. **bad sermons**: ‘The most serious defects in his tragedies artistically speaking, are: his constant employment of the *Deus ex machina*; the disconnection of his choral odes from the subject of the play; the extremely awkward and formal character of his prologues; and the frequent introduction of frigid maxims and philosophical disquisitions’ (Smith, *Class. Dict.*). When in India, Macaulay seems to have considerably modified his views about Euripides, and preferred him for a time to Sophocles (see *Macaulay’s Life*, pop. ed., pp. 312, 323, 694). ‘I could not bear Euripides at college,’ he writes, ‘but I now read my recantation ... the *Medea*, the *Alcestis*, the *Troades*, and the *Bacchae* are alone sufficient to place him in the very first rank.’ And again: ‘I can hardly account for the contempt which I felt for Euripides. I own that I like him now better than Sophocles.’ But his enthusiasm cooled. In 1853 he wrote to his schoolboy nephew: ‘I know of no other who can be added to this list (of first-rate Athenians). Certainly not Euripides ...’

l. 23. **sad Electra’s poet**: i.e. Euripides. The quotation is from Sonnet VIII. :

... the repeated air  
Of sad Electra’s poet had the power  
To save Athenian walls from ruin bare.

Both Sophocles and Euripides wrote an *Electra*. That of Sophocles is perhaps the most beautiful, if not the most powerful, of his extant plays, while the *Electra* of Euripides is considered by modern critics to be one of his worst, and to afford an example of how a sublime theme may be vulgarised by a straining after realism and pathetic effects. Schlegel, for instance, in his *Dramatische Litteratur*, speaks of it as a pitiable melodrama, and holds up to scorn its serio-comic absurdities in contrast to the dignity and beauty of the tragedy of Sophocles. This, however, was not the general opinion of the ancients, although Aristophanes ridiculed Euripides unmercifully in his comedies. Aristotle defines him as the ‘most pathetic’ of the Greek tragedians, and it is indisputable that his writings enjoyed a general popularity far greater than did those of Sophocles or Aeschylus. Milton’s lines allude to a story, probably fabulous, related by Plutarch in his Life of Lysander, the Spartan general who captured Athens in 404 b.c., and thus put an end to the great Peloponnesian war. It had been decided, or at least proposed, that Athens should be razed to the ground. Lysander himself and other Spartans were inclined to more merciful measures, but their allies were urgent. The thing still hung in the balance, when at a banquet a certain Phocian bard sang or recited a passage from the *Electra* of Euripides, in which she bewails her fate—how she, the daughter of the great Agamemnon, bereft of all her dearest, and treated as a menial by her own mother, had been thrust forth from the ancestral palace and

wedded to a country boor; for this is the story told, perhaps partly invented, by Euripides. Overcome by the pathos of the poem the Spartans are said to have decided to spare the city, and merely to demolish the forts of the Piræus and the 'Long Walls,' which connected Athens with its port. On another occasion, after the capture of Syracuse by the Spartans during the same war (413 B.C.), as Plutarch relates in his Life of Nicias, Athenian prisoners, doomed to the mines, gained their liberty by reciting the plays of Euripides. Browning has used this motive in his *Balaustion*.

l. 24. Queen of Fairy-land ...: see *Mids.-Night's Dream*, iv. i. In his *Criticism* Macaulay writes with reference to the admiration of Dante for Virgil: 'It has more than once happened to me to see minds, graceful and majestic as the Titania of Shakespeare, bewitched by the charms of an ass's head, bestowing on it the fondest caresses, and crowning it with the sweetest flowers.'

l. 27. Had Milton taken Æschylus .... Hallam (*Lit. Hist.* iv. 5) however asserts: 'In *Samson* we sometimes have the pompous tone of Æschylus; more frequently the sustained majesty of Sophocles. We might search the Greek tragedies long for a character so powerfully conceived and maintained as that of Samson.' Macaulay, however, refers rather to the action of the play than the 'tone' or 'character.'

Page 15, l. 1. alkali: from Arabic *al*, 'the' (as in 'algebra' etc.), and *kali*, the 'saltwort' (*salsola kali*), a glabrous plant of the 'goosefoot' family, with leaves terminating in a stout prickle, common in maritime sands and salt-marshes, from the ashes of which potash was first procured. (Possibly connected with Grk. *καυλός*, Lat. *caulis*; whence Germ. *kohl*, Engl. *cauliflower*, *kale*, *seakale* etc.).

l. 6. the least successful effort ...: 'It could only be,' says Dr. Johnson, 'by long prejudice and the bigotry of learning, that Milton could prefer the ancient tragedies, with their encumbrance of a chorus, to the exhibitions of the French and English stages; and it is only by a blind confidence in the reputation of Milton that his drama can be praised'; and again, 'it is a tragedy which only ignorance would admire, and bigotry applaud.' '*Samson Agonistes*,' says Hallam, 'is the latest of Milton's poems; we see in it, perhaps more distinctly than in *Paradise Regained*, the ebb of a mighty tide.' 'But while,' says Mr. Pattison, 'for the biographer of Milton, *Samson Agonistes* is charged with pathos, it must be felt that as a composition the drama is languid, nerveless, occasionally halting, never brilliant.' Mr. Stopford Brooke takes a more favourable view, but allows that it is by its 'strong personal and historical element, even more than by its poetic excellence, that it has deserved to gain the reverence and sympathy of Englishmen.'

l. 8. **Italian Masque**: A primitive kind of Masque 'formed part of the pleasures of the court even so early as the reign of Edward III., who kept Christmas at Guilford in 1348 with mumming in masks and fancy dresses. ... The more elaborate Masque was introduced from Italy very early in Henry VIII's reign. ... In these Masques there was dumb-show and dancing, but no speaking' (Morley, *First Sketch of Engl. Lit.*, where full details will be found. See also Pattison's *Milton*, p. 21). For the derivation, see on p. 12, l. 32.

l. 11. **the Faithful Shepherdess**: a pastoral drama by Fletcher (1579-1625). His shepherdess is an imitation of Corisca in *Pastor Fido*: 'A mixture of tenderness, purity, indecency, and absurdity' (Hallam). 'An immodest eulogy on modesty' (Schlegel). 'Milton,' says Hallam, 'has borrowed largely from his predecessor, and by quoting the lyric parts of the *Faithful Shepherdess*, it would be easy to deceive anyone not accurately familiar with the songs of *Comus*.'

l. 12. **the Aminta**: a pastoral drama by Tasso (1544-1595), written when he was at the court of the Duke of Ferrara. It is full of delicate beauty, but is too artificial, and lacks the natural tones of passion. It contains many reminiscences of the *Idylls* of Theocritus and the *Elegies* of Virgil.

l. 13. **the Pastor Fido**, by Guarini (1537-1612), was inspired by the *Aminta*. Guarini made the acquaintance of Tasso at Ferrara. On reading the *Pastor Fido*, Tasso remarked that 'if Guarini had never read the *Aminta* he would never have excelled it.' The *Pastor Fido* has more variety and animation, but less beauty than the *Aminta*—from which Guarini borrowed unscrupulously.

l. 23. **russet**: (Ital. *rossetto*) 'ruddy': hence, from the colour, the peasant's smock :

'Thus robed in russet I romed about' (*Piers the Plowman*).

'Russet yeas and honest kersie noes' (*Love's Labour Lost*, v. ii.).

l. 25. **May-day**: Compare what Macaulay says (1824) of the worst of Petrarch's poems when contrasted with the best: 'They differ from them as a May-day procession of chimney-sweepers differs from the Field of the Cloth of Gold. They have the gaudiness, but not the wealth' (*Criticism on Petrarch*).

l. 27. **crucible** (med. Lat. *crucibulum*, Fr. *creuset*, in Chaucer 'crosslet') is said by some etymologists to be so called because the chemical crucible, in which metals were tested by heat, was of the form of a cross or marked with a cross, but it probably is either from Lat. *cruciare*, 'to put to the torture,' i.e. 'to test,' or else from Ital. *crogiare*, 'to stew,' whence *crogiuolo*, or *crociuolo*, 'stew-pan,' which was confounded with Ital. *cruce*, 'cross.' Others connect it with Fr. *cruche*, Germ. *Krug*, 'jug.'

**Page 16, l. 4. Sir Henry Wotton :** ‘had been as a young man secretary to the Earl of Essex, had then lived in Florence, and served the Grand Duke of Tuscany as diplomatist. Being sent as ambassador to James VI. of Scotland, Wotton pleased that monarch so much that he was employed by him, when King of England, as his ambassador to Venice and to the princes of Germany’ (Morley). He seems to have disliked court life, and preferred to be ambassador at Venice, ‘to tell lies for the good of his country.’ He was made Provost of Eton in 1624. When Milton was starting for Italy (1637), Sir Henry Wotton gave him a letter of introduction and good advice, viz. *i pensieri stretti, ed il riso sciolto* (close thoughts and open countenance). His prose works and his poems were published (1651) by Isaac Walton.

**l. 6. Dorique.** The Dorians, a people of N. Greece, conquered the Peloponnesus (perhaps about 1100 B.C.), and founded great colonies in Asia Minor and Sicily. From them we have Doric architecture, Doric music, Doric dialect, etc., and as pastoral poetry was cultivated especially in Sicily and written (*e.g.* the *Idylls* of Theocritus) in this Doric dialect, ‘Dorique delicacy’ would mean ‘Theocritean delicacy’ of style.

**l. 14. Thyrsis:** the attendant spirit in *Comus* appears later ‘in the habit of Thyrsis’—Thyrsis is a common name for a shepherd in pastoral poetry (as in Theocritus, *Idyll*, i.). Matthew Arnold’s *Thyrsis* is a pastoral lament on the death of the poet Clough. The lines quoted by Macaulay, and all the expressions in his paraphrase are taken from the last song in *Comus*.

**l. 20. nard and cassia :** probably the ancient ‘*nardus indica*’ was a kind of Valerian; spikenard = *spica nardi*, *i.e.* the spiked root of the nard; *Cassia*, or *casia*, may be an odoriferous laurel. From them unguents were made. Cf. *Psalm xiv. 8.* [The Cassia of modern botany is leguminous.]

**l. 21. Hesperides :** the daughters of Hesperus, the Evening Star, or the West. The islands of the Hesperides are probably the Cape de Verde islands.

**l. 22. minor poems :** *e.g. Lycidas, The Ode on the Nativity, and the Arcades.* Macaulay does not profess to give a full account of Milton’s poems, but the *Lycidas* should hardly be omitted by any one who undertakes to estimate Milton’s poetic genius. As, however, it is not the duty of an annotator to describe what is conspicuous only for its absence from the text, the reader is referred to the attack made on the *Lycidas* by Dr. Johnson (see also the counter-attack by Professor Masson, given by Mr. Deighton in his edition, in this series, of Johnson’s *Milton*), and Pattison’s *Milton* (p. 29), Stopford Brooke’s *Milton* (p. 25), Hallam’s *Lit. Hist.* iii. 270-272, and Morley’s *Sketch of Engl. Lit.* (p. 559). The name *Lycidas* means ‘son of a wolf’, and is the name of the shepherd in the 9th *Eclogue* of Virgil,

from which Milton has also borrowed Amaryllis. It has nothing in the world to do with a 'white goat,' as Mr. Morley asserts, the Greek word for which is *leūcītas*.

l. 25. *Paradise Regained*: Macaulay seems, on the whole, to be of Dr. Johnson's opinion: 'Of the *Paradise Regained* the general judgment seems to be right, that it is in many parts elegant, and everywhere instructive.' For a just and appreciative account, see Stopford Brooke's *Milton*, pp. 149 *sq.* Though the *Par. Reg.* lacks the sustained power and dramatic action of the *Par. Lost*, it contains passages of unrivalled beauty. It consists of four books, in which is fully described the Temptation—for it was, according to Milton's Puritan ideas, rather by the victory won at the Temptation than by the sacrifice of Christ that Paradise was regained for man. The German imitator of Milton, Klopstock, has described the ministry of Christ and the crucifixion, in 20 books of nearly 1000 lines apiece.

l. 29. *In preferring*. It is pointed out by later biographers that this cannot be certainly inferred from what Milton's nephew Phillips says, viz. that, when the *Paradise Regained* was disparaged, Milton 'could not hear with patience any such thing.'

**Page 17, l. 4. *Paradise Lost*.** For an account and criticisms see books mentioned in Preface. Dr. Johnson's criticism is well worth reading. He was incapable of appreciating the real poetic worth of the Poem, but his remarks are full of sturdy common-sense. Addison gives a running commentary, with many quotations—of the same nature as Miss Rossetti's *Shadow of Dante*. His criticisms are justly condemned by Matthew Arnold (*French Critic*) as conventional and of no great value. Mr. Stopford Brooke's analysis of the Poem is charming. For possible sources of the *Paradise Lost*, see Deighton's preface to Johnson's *Milton*; also Pattison's *Milton*, p. 201.

**Divine Comedy**: In his Epistle to Can Grande, Dante explains why he calls his Poem a Comedy. After defining comedy as that which 'begins with something harsh, but has a prosperous ending,' he says, 'Hence we see why my work is called a Comedy; for if we regard the subject, at the beginning it is horrible and repulsive, since it begins with Hell; but in the conclusion it is prosperous, pleasant, and desirable, seeing that it ends with Paradise.' Posterity has added to this Comedy the epithet 'Divine.' The *Divina Commedia* consists of three Cantiche, viz. the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso*—in all a hundred Cantos, each of about 145 lines. Dante describes how on Good Friday eve, 1300 A.D., he lost his way in a dark forest. At sunrise, when attempting to climb a mount, he is beset by three ravening beasts, a leopard, a lion, and a she-wolf—the symbols of sensuality, pride, and avarice (cf.

*Isaiah*, xi. 5). Here Virgil meets him, and under his guidance he descends into Hell, and views the abodes of the damned; and after passing the earth's centre, where Satan is fixed, he reaches at sunrise on Easter Sunday the shore of an island in the midst of the Southern Ocean, the Antipodes of Jerusalem. This island is the Mountain of Purgatory, on the summit of which, in the Earthly Paradise, Dante meets Beatrice, whom he had loved and lost. From the Earthly Paradise he and Beatrice soar up through the regions of air and fire into the heavenly Paradise. Ascending from sphere to sphere of beatitude, he meets visionary splendours of the spirits of the happy Dead, till, in the Empyrean—that motionless expanse of light and love and joy which lies beyond the nine concentric heavens—he beholds the great White Rose, the true home of Blessed Souls. Here Beatrice must quit him; but at the invocation of St. Bernard Dante is permitted to rise into the very Presence of God, and to view with mortal eyes the One in Three (the Beatific Vision). For a moment he gazes undestroyed. Then imagination fails, and his human will surrenders itself to that divine Love 'which moves the sun and the other stars,' and to that Will in which alone *è nostra pace*. For Dante's Life, see preface to *Selections from the Inferno* (Clarendon Press), and for the Poem, see Mr. Symonds' *Introduction to the Study of Dante*, or Miss Rossetti's *Shadow of Dante*. In 1838 Macaulay wrote from Florence: 'I believe very few people have ever had their minds more thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of any great work than mine is with that of the Divine Comedy. Dante's execution I take to be far beyond that of any other artist who has operated on the imagination by means of words.' And in his *Criticism on Dante* he says: 'The style of Dante is, if not his highest, perhaps his most peculiar excellence. I know nothing with which it can be compared. The noblest models of Greek composition must yield to it.' He was, however, incapable of appreciating the *Paradiso*, for which, as Mr. Symonds rightly says, we require 'a portion of Shelley's or Beethoven's soul.' He allows that it possesses 'force and felicity of diction,' but asserts that 'it is by no means equal in other respects to the two preceding parts of the poem.' To the *Paradiso* he makes no allusion in the present Essay.

1. 8. father of Tuscan literature. In his *Criticism on 'Dante* (see *Remarks*) Macaulay says: 'He was the first man who fully described and exhibited the powers of his native dialect. The Latin tongue... debased by the admixture of innumerable barbarous words and idioms... was the language of the cabinet, of the university, of the church. It was employed by all who aspired to distinction in the higher walks of poetry. In compassion to the ignorance of his mistress a cavalier might now and then proclaim his passion in Tuscan and Provençal rhymes. But no writer had conceived it possible that the dialect of

peasants and market-women should possess sufficient energy and precision for a majestic and durable work. Dante adventured first. ... He has thus acquired the glory, not only of producing the finest narrative poem of modern times, but also of creating a language.'

Dante was born at Florence (1265), was Prior (magistrate) in 1300, was banished in 1302, and died at Ravenna in 1321. A rude native poetry had existed during earlier centuries in Italy side by side with medieval Latin literature, but towards the middle of the twelfth century the Provençal Troubadours (many of them having been driven out of their native land by the crusade against the Albigenses) introduced into Italy the new style. Among the first of the new Italian singers were Sordello of Mantua, Guido, Guineilli, and Cino of Pistoia; and among Dante's contemporaries the most celebrated was his friend Guido Cavalcante. Beautiful as some of their poems are, they are but the morning stars that faded away before the great sun of Dante's genius. Dante is said to have begun his *Commedia* in Latin, thus:

Ultima regna canam, fluido contermina mundo,  
Spiritibus quæ lata patent, quæ praemia solvunt. ...

Fortunately he abandoned this attempt, and betook himself to his native Tuscan, which by his 'sweet new style' and his unsurpassed imagination he raised to the first rank as a language of poetry. He has discussed the claims of the Italian and the Latin, and has given us an account of the various dialects of the former, in his treatise, *De Vulgari Eloquio*.

1. 11. *hieroglyphics*. ... As it seems to the point, I venture to quote what I have written elsewhere. 'When Cortez landed in Mexico, a letter was sent by the natives to the chief Montezuma with the tidings that white men with enormous canoes had appeared off the coast. I call it a letter. It was a picture of the scene. Again, the Bushmen of S. Africa possess a literature. It is a literature not of words, but of depicted scenes. In their river-caves I have read of fierce conflicts with the white-faced conquerors—a chapter in their national history written in pictures of blazing villages, huddling droves of cattle, the slain, the fugitives, the victors. ... But objects are innumerable, and there are many which refuse to be represented thus. It was found necessary to come to some agreement by which the picture should not only represent a certain object, but something else. As an example of such symbolism take the old Egyptian hieroglyphics. These, we are told, are both pictorial and symbolical. Thus the picture of a man signifies a man: that of a serpent denotes not only a serpent, but also regal authority; a lion is the symbol of Phtha, the god of fire.' [Later hieroglyphics are phonetic. Thus Osiris is denoted by a throne (*os*) and an eye (*iri*). The

Phœnicians were perhaps the first to use a phonetic alphabet, though traces of phonetics are to be found in ancient Mexican scrolls.]

l. 17. **grotesque**: literally ‘grotto-like,’ i.e. as fantastic as the rocks, stalactites, etc., of a natural or artificial grotto. Milton (*Par. Lost*, iv. 135) uses it of the fantastic forms of trees—unless, indeed, we should refer it to the craggy sides of the hill:

A steep wilderness, whose hairy sides  
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,  
Access denied.

l. 21. **of a traveller**. ‘The *Commedia*,’ says Dean Church, in his celebrated Essay, ‘is the work of a wanderer. ... The writer’s mind is full of the recollections and definite images of his various journeys. The scenery of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* is that of travel. ... Nowhere could we find so many of the most characteristic and strange sensations of the traveller touched with such life.’ Macaulay repeats here what he wrote in his *Criticism on Dante*: ‘His similes are rather those of a traveller than of a poet. He employs them, not to display his ingenuity by fanciful analogies ... but to give an exact idea of the objects which he is describing.’ In *Modern Painters* (iii. 14) Ruskin says: ‘Milton’s effort, in all that he tells us of his *Inferno*, is to make it indefinite; Dante’s to make it definite. ... The *Inferno* is accurately separated into circles drawn with well-pointed compasses; mapped and properly surveyed in every direction; trenched in a thoroughly good style of engineering from depth to depth, and divided in the “accurate middle” of its deepest abyss into a concentric series of ten moats and embankments, like those about a castle, with bridges from each embankment to the next.’

l. 27. **The ruins ... Trent**. See *Inferno*, xii. 1-5. ‘The place to which we came, in order to descend the bank, was Alpine ... such that every eye would shrink from it. Such is that ruin which struck the Adige in its flank, on this side of Trent, either through earthquake or by reason of failing support.’ One such landslip is said to have taken place in 1310. Those who have travelled down the Adige will remember more than one spot such as this that Dante describes. Ruskin makes the following rather amusing comment: ‘Dante shows himself to have been a notably bad climber; and being fond of sitting in the sun, looking at his fair Baptistry, or walking in a dignified manner on flat pavement in a long robe, it puts him seriously out of his way when he has to take to his hands and knees, or to look to his feet.’ At Trent (Trento), on the Adige (Etsch), was held the celebrated Council of Trent (1545) which launched the anathema of the Roman Church against Protestantism. in response to the challenge of the Augsburg Confession (1530).

l. 30. **Phlegethon ... Aqua Cheta.** See *Inferno*, xvi. 94. Phlegethon, or Pyriphlegethon, the 'River of Fire' of the Greek Hades, as also the Styx, Acheron, and Cocytus, is introduced by Dante into his Inferno. They derive their streams from the tears of a huge image of gold, silver, brass, and clay (*Daniel*, ii. 31) standing under Mount Ida in Crete. This image represents Zeus or Jupiter (born in Crete, or, according to others, on the 'many-fountained' Trojan Ida) and the streams of his tears flow down to form the great lake of ice in which Satan is fixed at the centre of the earth. Dante conceives Phlegethon as a river of blood. From afar he heard, 'like the hum which beehives make, the resounding of its water,' as it fell from the seventh into the eighth circle. When he reached the cataract its 'tainted waters re-echoed so that in a little time it would have stunned the ear.' He compares it with the river 'which is called Aqua Cheta (Quiet Water) in its upper course, before it *envalleys* itself in its lower bed.' This is the river Montone, which descends near the Abbey of St. Benedict into the plain of Romagna and enters the sea not far from Ravenna.

l. 33. **Arles.** See *Inf.* ix. 112. After passing over the Stygian marsh, Dante and Virgil enter the flaming city of Dis (Pluto), and behold the place full of the sepulchres of heretics, 'with their covers all raised, and all so glowing hot as no art requires iron to be. ... As at Arles, where the Rhone stagnates, as at Pola near the Quarnaro (gulf), the sepulchres made all the place uneven.' At Aliscamps (Elysi Campi), the ancient necropolis of Arles, where the Rhone begins to form its delta, there are numberless *tumuli*, which tradition asserted to be the graves of Charlemagne's peers and their ten thousand warriors. Compare Ariosto, *Or. Fur.* 39, 72 :

presso ad Arli, ove il Rodano stagna,  
Piena di sepolture è la campagna.

l. 35. **dim intimations:** On the much-vexed question of Milton's indefinite and Dante's definite method, and on their respective claims to 'sublimity' and 'imagination,' see books mentioned in Preface, especially Symond's *Introduction*, p. 217 sq. Mr. Pattison says: 'A general arraignment has been laid against Milton of a vagueness and looseness of imagery which contrasts unfavourably with the vivid and precise detail of other poets, of Homer or of Dante, for example. ... Milton is not one of the poets of inaccurate imagination. ... When he intends a picture, he is unmistakably distinct... but he is not often intending pictures. He is not, like Dante, always seeing; he is mostly thinking in a dream.' Green (*Hist.* p. 585) says that Milton's Satan and Belial stand out 'colossal, yet distinct.' On the other hand, Ruskin (*Mod. Painters*, iii. 14) says: 'Note that Milton's vagueness is not the sign of imagination, but of its absence, so far as it is significative in the matter. For it does not follow,

because Milton did not map out his Inferno as Dante did, that he could not have done so if he had chosen; only it was the easier and less imaginative process to leave it vague than to define it. Imagination is always the seeing and asserting faculty; that which obscures or conceals may be judgment or feeling, but not invention.' The same argument applies in the case of 'præ-Raphaelitism' in painting. In Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay* we find: 'A warm admirer of Robert Hall, Macaulay heard with pride how the great preacher, then well-nigh worn out with that long disease, his life, was discovered lying on the floor, employed in learning, by aid of grammar and dictionary, enough Italian to enable him to verify the parallel between Milton and Dante.' Matthew Arnold's rather unamiable and very unfair comment on this is, 'Poor Robert Hall! ... Alas! even if his life had been prolonged like Hezekiah's, he could not have verified it, for it is unverifiable' (*French Critic*).

**Page 18, l. 2.** In one passage: *i.e. Par. Lost*, i. 194 sq.

1. 6. **he stands like Teneriffe**: *Par. Lost*, iv. 985 sq.,

On the other side, Satan, alarmed,  
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
Like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved :  
His stature reached the sky. ...

Teneriffe, one of the Canary islands, is 12,182 feet high. Mount Atlas, in Morocco (about 12,000 feet), is the highest peak of the great range (the 'Atlas' of the ancients), dividing the Mediterranean from Sahara.

1. 9. **Nimrod**: the supposed founder of Babel. He is identified with the hero Izdubar whose exploits are related in old Babylonian (Accadian) tablets and cylinders. The vast ruins of Birs Nimroud are supposed to be relics of the great Tower. In the *Inferno* (xxxii. 58 sq.), when Dante and Virgil approach, he trumpets forth a meaningless jargon, in which some commentators recognise words from five different languages. Macaulay's translation is fairly correct, except that he makes an ugly blunder in translating 'la pina di San Pietro' as the 'ball of St. Peter's.' It means the pine-cone of St. Peter's, eleven feet in height, which originally stood on the mole of Hadrian (or perhaps on the Pantheon). In front of the old Basilica of St. Peter there was a drinking fountain ('il Paradiso') erected in 370 A.D. by Pope Damasus for the convenience of pilgrims. About a century later Pope Simmacus placed a metal roof over this fountain, and set the pine-cone on its summit, where it still stood in Dante's times. Subsequently it was removed to the Vatican gardens, where it can still be seen—in the Giardino della Pigna. What Macaulay translates as 'Germans' is 'Frieslanders' in the original.

1. 15. **Mr. Cary's translation**, in blank verse, is the work of a poet, but gives no more idea of the original than Pope's trans-

lation gives of the *Iliad*. For those who wish merely to study the contents of the *Commedia* Dr. Carlyle's prose translation of the *Inferno*, and Mr. Butler's of the *Purgatory* and *Paradise* are the best. The translation in Dante's metre (*terza rima*) by Mr. Haselfoot is the only one which at all makes the same impression as the original.

l. 18. *lazar*: Ital. *Lazzaro*, the Lazarus (of the parable); hence a sick person, especially a leper; and *lazar-house*, or *lazareth*, Ital. *lazzaretto*, a hospital. It can scarcely be said that Milton in this passage (*Par. Lost*, xi. 564 sq.) 'avoids loathsome details.' On the contrary, he gives a very long list of loathsome maladies: 'Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs, intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs, etc.' He does not, perhaps, put these details in quite such a concrete form as Dante, and the shadowy phantoms of Despair and Death are unlike anything to be found in the *Commedia*. The criticism of Dr. Johnson on Milton's *Death* does not apply directly to this passage, but is worth quoting. 'To invest abstract ideas with form, and animate them with activity, has always been the right of poetry. ... To give them any real employment, or ascribe to them any material agency, is to make them allegorical no longer, but to shock the mind by ascribing effects to non-entity. ... In the *Alcestis* of Euripides we see *Death* brought upon the stage; but no precedents can justify absurdity. ...' He objects to the scene where *Death* offers battle to Satan, and to the building of the bridge to Hell by sin and death: 'a mole of aggravated soil cemented with asphaltus; a work too bulky for ideal architects.'

l. 19. *Malebolge* means 'Evil Pits,' viz. the ten concentric moats of the 8th Circle in which the Fraudulent are punished. This 'last ward of Malebolge' is eleven miles in circuit. The following is an example of 'loathsome detail' described in Dante's fashion: 'I saw two sitting propped against each other like two pans set to warm; from head to foot they were spotted with scabs. And never did I see currycomb so plied by an ostler for whom his master is waiting, or who is in a hurry to get to bed, as each of these plied upon himself incessantly the bite of his nails by reason of the itch, which has no other remedy; and the nails dragged down the scurf as does a knife the scales of a bream or of any other fish that has them larger.'

l. 27. *Valdichiana*, the 'valley of the (river) Chiana,' near Arezzo, was formerly marshy and malarious, but has now been drained, and is 'one of the most beautiful and fruitful of the Tuscan valleys' (*Longfellow*). The passage is from *Inf.* xxix. 46 sq. 'All the sick' should be 'all diseases.'

of the Tuscan swamps: Dante says, 'of Maremma'—i.e. the swampy district between Pisa and Siena. It is mentioned several times by Dante, who speaks of it as infested by wild beasts and

serpents. ‘In some parts the water is brackish, ... there are many hot springs which form pools, ... some exhale sulphur, others boil with a mephitic gas. ... The peasants migrate hither in winter to feed their cattle. ... When summer returns they decamp, but often too late; for many leave their corpses on the road, or bring home the Maremmian disease’ (*Forsyth’s Italy*). The region has of late years been partially drained and made fairly habitable.

1. 31. **settling precedence.** In his *Criticism on Dante*, Macaulay says: ‘I will frankly confess that the vague sublimity of Milton affects me less than these reviled details of Dante.’

1. 36. **He is the very man ...** ‘The people of Verona, when they saw him on the streets, used to say *Eccovi l'uom ch'è stato all' Inferno* ... Ah, yes, he had been in Hell!’ (Carlyle.)

**Page 19, l. 2. Second death:** *Inf.* i. 117. Cf. *Rev.* ix. 6: ‘And in these days men shall seek death and shall not find it: and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.’ Probably it means the death of the soul, total annihilation.

**on the portal:** i.e. the Gate of Hell, ‘Through me is the way into the doleful city; through me the way into eternal dole; through me the way amidst the people lost. Justice moved my High Maker; Divine Power made me, Wisdom Supreme, and Primal Love. Before me were no things created but the eternal; and I endure eternal. All hope abandon, ye who enter. These words of dusky colour I saw written upon the summit of a portal’ (*Inf.* iii. 1-11).

1. 4. **Gorgon:** When Dante approaches the fiery city of Dis (*Inf.* ix.) three ‘Infernal Furies’ (the Erinyes, viz. Tisiphone, Alecto, and Megaera) rise up ‘erect on the glowing summit of a high tower, stained with blood,’ and with their heads wreathed with serpents. They call out, ‘Let Medusa come, that we may turn him into stone!’ Then Virgil bids Dante close his eyes; ‘and he turned me away and trusted not to my hands, but closed my eyes with his own hands.’

1. 5. **Barbariccia and Draghignazzo:** two of the winged fiends, armed with prongs and hooks, who hover over sinners immersed in a river of boiling pitch. The sinners lie there like frogs in a ditch ‘with only their muzzles out,’ or show their backs for a moment like porpoises. ‘I saw, and my heart still shudders at it, one linger, as it happens that one frog remains while the other darts away. And Graffiacane, who was nearest to him, hooked his pitchy locks and hauled him up, so that to me he seemed an otter.’ The poor wretch is terribly mauled by the fiends, but escapes; whereupon they attack each other and fall into the boiling pitch. Dante and Virgil pass on, but ere long the demons are seen in the distance in hot pursuit ‘with wings extended.’

Then 'My Guide suddenly caught me up—as a mother who is awakened by the noise and sees near her the kindled flames, and catches up her child and flees and stays not, caring more for him than herself, so that she does not even clothe herself in a shift. And down from the ridge of the hard bank he gave himself supine to the sloping rock.'

l. 7. **Lucifer.** Satan is conceived by Dante as a shaggy monster (see on p. 17, l. 4), with bat-wings and three faces—red, yellow, and black. In his three mouths he is crunching Judas Iscariot, Brutus, and Cassius. 'I clasped my Master's neck ; and he took opportunity of time and place, and when the wings were opened wide, he applied himself to the shaggy sides, and then from shag to shag descended down, between the tangled hair and frozen crusts (*i.e.* the edge of the ice in which Satan is fixed). When we had come to where the thigh revolves, just on the swelling of the haunch, my Guide with labour and with difficulty turned his head where before he had his feet, and grappled on the hair as one who mounts, so that I thought we were returning into Hell.' Thus they pass the Centre of Gravity, and enter a long dark cavern which leads them up to the surface of the earth in the southern hemisphere. Here they find themselves at the base of the Mountain of Purgatory—Macaulay's 'Mount of Expiation.'

l. 8. **the purifying angel :** the Angel who guards the Gate of Purgatory, and who marks Dante's brow with seven P's, as symbols of the seven deadly sins (*Peccata*). These marks disappear one by one as he mounts up through the seven Terraces of the mountain.

l. 14. **Amadis of Gaul**; a Spanish prose romance, written about 1300 A.D. by Vasco de Lobeyra. Two centuries later 'the four books by Vasco grew to twenty by successive additions, which have been held by lovers of romance far inferior to the original' [Hallam]. It was translated into English by Munday in 1619. *Amadis* was the early forerunner of the newer European romance, such as *Don Quixote*, as Boccaccio's tales were the forerunner of the modern novel.

*Gulliver's Travels* (his four voyages to Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the Houyhnhnms), were published by Swift in 1726. In his *Criticism on Dante*, Macaulay says : 'The great source, as it appears to me, of the power of the Divine Comedy is the strong belief with which the story seems to be told. In this respect the only books which approach to its excellence are *Gulliver's Travels* and *Robinson Crusoe*.' Swift's 'air of veracity' is imitated, and perhaps rivalled, by Jules Verne. Swift probably was indebted for his method to Godwin's *Man in the Moon* (1638), or even to the *Dialogues* of Lucian (about 150 A.D.).

l. 25. **Rotherhithe**, the village to which Gulliver, 'first a Surgeon and then a Captain of several ships,' retired.

l. 29. **Of all poets...** How reckless Macaulay is in making such statements, when it suits his argument, may be seen from the following passage from his *Criticism on Dante*, written only a few months before this Essay : ‘This difficult task of representing supernatural beings to our minds in a manner which shall be neither unintelligible to our intellects, nor wholly inconsistent with our ideas of their nature, has never been so well performed as by Dante.’

**Page 20, l. 1. many functions...** For example, where (a) the angel Raphael (*Par. Lost*, v.) partakes of the viands offered by Adam ‘not seemingly... but with keen despatch of real hunger’; (b) where Satan ‘on the tree of life... sat like a cormorant’; or where he crouched ‘Squat like a toad close at the ear of Eve (*Par. Lost*, iv.), or having found the serpent ‘in at his mouth... entered,’ and ‘inclosed in serpent... tempted Eve’ (*Par. Lost*, ix.). In the latter examples Milton uses a ‘trick of strong imagination,’ which has been successfully employed (and, after all, success is the only test) by other great poets. His cormorant is, for instance, evidently imitated from Homer, who describes two deities perching on the top of an oak in the shape of vultures. Dr. Johnson inveighs against these transformations. Milton’s ‘infernal and celestial powers,’ he says, ‘are sometimes pure spirit, and sometimes animated body,’ and, as pure spirit cannot be represented except as invested with form and matter, Milton should have ‘kept immateriality out of sight.’ In the first example there is no transformation, but a spiritual being is endowed with ‘real hunger.’ This has also been objected to by critics as inadmissible; but here too Milton had the poetical authority of the ancients, who represent, for instance, Demeter eating the flesh of Pelops, and Ares and Aphrodite feeling wounds inflicted by human weapons.

All such disquisitions, like these of Dr. Johnson and Macaulay as to the right and the wrong method in poetry, are very profitless. No such laws can be laid down for art creations. If they *put us to confusion* (as a breach in Nature’s continuity would do), then they are meaningless for us—they have no message for us. Dr. Johnson was repelled and moved to ridicule by certain creations of Milton, as some persons are by the pictures of old præ-Raphaelites; but for most of us these transformations are full of weird imaginative power. The passage in which, at the touch of Ithuriel’s spear, Satan, lurking in the squat toad, starts up into his own shape, inflaming the air with sudden blaze, is of unsurpassed sublimity. For some, as for Dr. Johnson, such scenes are grotesque; they scandalise common sense and metaphysical preconceptions, and it is useless to lead such persons to such masterpieces (as Matthew Arnold would have us do), and keep them there until they drink. Moreover, many who love and

appreciate Homer and his gods are scandalised at any such representation of *their* God as that by Michael Angelo or by Milton :

He took the golden compasses, prepared  
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe  
This universe, and all created things ;  
One foot he centred, and the other turned  
Round through the vast profundity obscure.

But one's poetic sense is perhaps justly offended by Raphael's 'keen despatch of real hunger.' It does not appeal to the imagination, nor add force or meaning—as does the wounded Ares of Homer. We feel that it is merely a device for introducing Milton's theory about angelic 'substance.' Whether or not Milton was justified in holding such views is, of course, a totally different question, nor does the knowledge of his views enable us (though Mr. Stopford Brooke seems to think so) to judge any better of the value or congruity of his poetic creations. But, even though it may not deserve the mockery poured upon it by Matthew Arnold, as a 'lucubration without substantial meaning,' Macaulay's assertion that Milton purposely 'left the whole in ambiguity' in order not to shock his philosophical and theological readers, and thereby 'laid himself open to a charge of inconsistency,' proves that he did not know the views of Milton with regard to spirit and matter (cf. on p. 1, preliminary note). Theoretically, Milton is certainly supported by biblical authority. The angels entertained by Abraham and by Lot seem to have been endowed with a very real hunger. Metaphysically, he held the doctrine propounded by St. Thomas Aquinas, the recognised champion of orthodoxy, and adopted by Dante, although Dante's poetic instinct did not allow him to make his angels eat and drink. Both poets held that angels are 'intelligential substances' (*Par. Lost*, v. 407 and *Par.* xxix.), not wholly immaterial. But while Dante believed them to be supernatural compounds of form and a special kind of matter,<sup>1</sup> Milton believed in the essential identity of spirit and matter. 'Spirit,' says Mr. Stopford Brooke, 'in Milton's sense of the word, is etherialised matter—the matter of which angels are made; and it is into this that the body of Adam will change, if he be obedient.' The assertion, therefore, of Dr. Johnson that Milton has 'unhappily perplexed his poetry with his philosophy,' though it may be worthless as criticism in most of the cases to which he applies it, is at least not so absurd as Macaulay's statement that Milton was inconsistent and 'philosophically wrong.'

### 1. 5. What is spirit? 'Macaulay's writing,' says Matthew

<sup>1</sup> It has been commonly asserted that Dante regards angels as 'entirely immaterial.' Dante students are referred to an article in the *Church Quarterly Review* (Oct., 1898), in which I have shown that this is erroneous. He regards them as form and matter supernaturally conjoined, so that they remain 'pure form' and 'pure matter.' Notice how Milton's angels, as Satan, vary enormously in size, according to circumstances.

Arnold, ‘passes for being admirably clear, and so externally it is ; but often it is really obscure, if one takes his deliverances seriously, and seeks to find in them a definite meaning.’ Of this the following three paragraphs are an example. It would be a mere waste of time to take them seriously, or to attempt to find any logical sequence in the argument. There is a buoyant, almost boyish, enthusiasm and cleverness in these ‘deliverances,’ which are very delightful if one just surrenders oneself to the stream of words regardless of their meaning. As Matthew Arnold puts it, ‘there is a multitude of readers, doubtless, for whom it is sufficient to have their ears tickled with fine rhetoric; but the tickling makes a serious reader impatient.’

l. 23. **The first inhabitants of Greece** .... There is no evidence of this. It is far more likely that the early inhabitants of Greece cultivated some form of fetish worship—probably the worship of the Powers of Nature—from which the ‘plastic’ Hellenic imagination bodied forth the gods and goddesses of the later polytheism. As Moses and the prophets among the Israelites, so such sages as Anaxagoras and Socrates among the Greeks, upheld alone the doctrine of the one invisible Deity, and endeavoured vainly to stem the ‘strong tendency of the multitude to idolatry,’ which had existed from the earliest times.

l. 27. **ancient Persians** .... See full account in note on p. 28.  
 l. 19. It is more probable that ‘the *material* contrast between light and darkness was gradually raised to a *moral* contrast between good and bad, and developed into an elaborate dualism’ (Spiegel, in Herzog’s *Encycl. der Theologie*).

l. 35. **Gibbon’s ‘Five Causes for the growth of Christianity’** are discussed in the celebrated 15th chapter of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. They are (1) the zeal of the Christians, derived from the Jews, but purified from a narrow and unsocial spirit; (2) the doctrine of a future life; (3) the miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive Church; (4) the pure and austere morals of the Christians; (5) the union and discipline of the Christian republic. Edward Gibbon was born in 1737, and died in 1794. The first volume of his *Decline and Fall* appeared in 1776. When at Magdalen College, Oxford, he turned Romanist, but was placed by his father under a Calvinist minister at Lausanne, in Switzerland, and was nominally ‘reconverted.’ In later life he seems to have been a sceptic. The idea of writing the history of Rome’s decline and fall is said to have first occurred to him while musing among its ruins. From 1774 to 1782 he was in Parliament. After this he returned to Lausanne, where he finished his history in 1788.

**Page 21, l. 10. the Academy.** The Academia was a piece of land on the bank of the Cephissus, not far from Athens. It was supposed to have belonged to an ancient Attic hero, Academus,

who assisted Castor and Pollux when in search of their sister Helen. It was afterwards planted with plane trees and olives, and used as a public park. Plato and Aristotle and their followers taught in this 'garden of Academus,' and were thence called the 'Academic philosophers.' When Sulla besieged Athens (B.C. 87) he cut down the trees of the Academia to construct his war-machines; but the place was afterwards replanted. Cicero named one of his villas (near Puteoli) 'Academia.'

I. 11. **the Portico**: Zeno (born in Cyprus about 350 B.C.) was the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy. He taught in the public Portico which was named the Stoa Poikilé, or 'variegated Portico,' because it was adorned by paintings (of Polygnotus). Hence he and his followers are called 'Stoics,' or 'philosophers of the Portico, or Porch.' [Similarly the Cynic philosophers may have been so called, not from their currish manners, but from the fact that their founder, Antisthenes, taught in the Gymnasium Cynosarges,' which possibly meant 'of the swift-footed dog.]

**fascæ of the Lictor**: a bundle of rods, usually of birch, tied round an axe, carried by Roman lictors. The number of lictors, who preceded officials with executive powers, varied with the dignity of the office. Thus a dictator had 24, while in Rome prætors were only allowed two fascæ without axes, and when in command of an army they had six with axes.

I. 12. **thirty legions**. The number of legions under Augustus was 25, under Alexander Severus (about 230 A.D.) it was 32. Each legion consisted of 10 cohorts, and each cohort of 6 centuries. The average strength of a legion was about 5000 infantry and 300 cavalry. The standing army of the later Empire numbered therefore about 170,000.

I. 15. **Paganism**: derived from Lat. *pagus*, 'a village'; thus a 'pagan' is a 'villager,' as opposed to the more highly educated (urbane) town-dwellers, who accepted Christianity before it spread to the country. Compare 'heath' and 'heathen' (Germ. *die Heide* and *der Heide*). Some, however, derive 'heathen' from Gk. *θύρικος*, 'gentile.'

I. 16. **St. George**. 'The legend of St. George,' says Mrs. Jameson, 'came to us from the East, where under various forms, as Apollo and the Python, as Bellerophon and the Chimæra, as Perseus and the Sea-monster, we see perpetually recurring this mythic allegory ... which reappears in Christian art in the legends of St. Michael and half a hundred other saints.' St. George was a native of Cappadocia. He rescued Cleodolinda, daughter of the king of Selene in Libya (or of Berytus in Syria), from a dragon, and suffered martyrdom in Palestine during the reign of Diocletian (about 300 A.D.). He is especially honoured by the Greeks, as the 'Great Martyr,' but was repudiated as apocryphal by the Roman church. 'His particular veneration in England

dates from the time of Richard I., who, in the wars of Palestine, placed himself and his army under the especial protection of St. George.' He seems, however, to have been a popular saint in England, even in Anglo-Saxon times.

1. 17. **St. Elmo.** In his note to Hor. *Carm.* i. 3. 1, Macleane says that Elmo may be a corruption of Helena, the sister of Castor and Pollux, but in Stadler's *Heiligen Lexicon* I find that Elmo or Ermo is a contraction of Erasmus. Saint Erasmus was bishop of one of the cities of the Antiochian patriarchate. During the persecution of Diocletian (about 300 A.D.) he fled to Mt. Lebanon, but was captured and tortured. An angel opened his prison doors, and he escaped to Italy and died at Formiae (now Mola di Gaeta). He was adopted by sailors as their patron saint, and the phosphorescent light which in hot countries sometimes flickers at the end of masts and yards is called 'St. Elmo's fire.' There is a castle of St. Elmo at Naples.

**Castor and Pollux:** the Dioscuri ('sons of Zeus'), brothers of Helen and Clytaemnestra. Their mother was Leda. According to one legend Pollux was the son of Zeus and immortal, Castor was the mortal son of the Spartan king Tyndareus; and when Castor was dying Pollux gained leave from Zeus that they should share the gift of immortality, so that each might spend alternate days in heaven and hell. Zeus afterwards rewarded the love of the two brothers by placing them as the Gemini (Twins) among the constellations of the Zodiac. They were the special protectors of sailors. The poet Horace several times mentions their 'bright stars.' (Hor. *Carm.* i. 3. 1; i. 12. 27; iv. 8. 31.)

1. 18. **Cecilia.** 'The legend of St. Cecilia is one of the most ancient handed down to us by the church ... and there can be little doubt that the main incidents of her life and martyrdom are founded in fact, though mixed up with the usual amount of marvels' (*Mrs. Jameson*). She was a Roman lady of noble birth, wife of Valerianus, and suffered martyrdom under Alexander Severus (about 230 A.D.). Her house was consecrated as a church, and the present church of Sta. Cecilia in Trastevere stands on the same site. 'At what period St. Cecilia came to be regarded as the patron saint of music, I cannot decide. In ancient representations she is not so distinguished; nor in the old, Italian series of subjects from her life have I found any in which she is figured as singing, or playing upon instruments' (*Mrs. Jameson*). The most celebrated picture of St. Cecilia is that by Raphael, at Bologna. Her body was exhumed in 1559 (some 30 years after the death of Raphael), and during the next half century there were few Italian artists who did not paint a St. Cecilia.

1. 33. **metaphysical:** 'For this word, under whose imposing auspices so much that is valuable, and so much that is absurd, has been given to the world, we are not indebted to Aristotle

himself, but to one of his commentators, Andronicus of Rhodes, who is supposed to have intended by the inscription upon his manuscripts ( $\tauὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικά$ ) that the fourteen books so styled were to follow the physical treatises' (Archer Butler). The word *metaphysics* therefore really means 'what follows physics.' The Greeks divided all philosophy into three parts: physics, ethics, and logic. Descartes says philosophy is a tree whose roots are metaphysics, trunk physics, and the branches the various sciences. Macaulay means that the metaphysician necessarily holds spirit to be totally immaterial, and that all poetic attempts to represent spirit as such must fail. We have seen, however, that Milton's metaphysics allowed him to hold the essential identity of spirit and matter. With Milton's and Dante's spiritual beings it is interesting to compare those of Shelley, and to discover whether also for us, as for Matthew Arnold, he is 'in poetry, no less than in life, a beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain' (*Essays in Criticism*). For the gist of following argument, such as it is, and comments, see on p. 20, l. 11.

Page 22, l. 11. Dr. Johnson: see on p. 20, l. 1.

l. 18. the contrary opinion, i.e. that spirits are immaterial.

l. 30. associated ideas: see on p. 11, l. 3.

Page 23, l. 6. Still it is a fault. This statement suits Macaulay's present argument, and is therefore made with his usual recklessness. For his assertion to the contrary, see on p. 18, l. 31, and compare what he says in his *Criticism on Dante*: 'The narratives are exactly what they should be—definite, but suggesting to the mind ideas of awful and indefinite wonder.... The whole effect is, beyond expression wild and unearthly.... His Minos, his Charon, his Pluto, are absolutely terrific.' Most readers of the *Commedia* will allow that Dante's creations fill one with an 'emotion of unearthly awe,' which is quite as intense as that inspired by Milton's shadowy forms of terror and grandeur. It is as profitless to criticise Dante's method as faulty as it would be to find fault with Orcagna's *Triumph of Death*, because it treats the supernatural otherwise than Michael Angelo's *Last Judgment* or Raphael's *St. Michael*. Macaulay attempts to persuade us that Dante *ought* not to have succeeded—but he *has* succeeded: 'the whole effect is, beyond expression wild and unearthly.' As Carlyle says, it was 'no light task; a right intense one; but a task which is done.'

l. 10. Don Juan.... In Mozart's opera there is a ghastly scene where the statue of the dead Commendatore, who had been killed by Don Juan, comes to sup with his murderer. The statue is animated by a demon, and in the midst of the feasting seizes upon Don Juan and hurries him away to hell.

l. 11. Dante's angels.... In neither poetry nor painting are to be found creations of such supernatural beauty and majesty as

Dante's angels. Dante students will feel how utterly inadequate the following description is—as every such description must be. 'Ginguéné has remarked the singular variety, as well as the beauty, of Dante's angels. Milton's, indeed, are commonplace in comparison. In the 8th canto of the *Inferno* the devils insolently refuse the poet and his guide an entrance into the City of Dis. An angel comes sweeping over the Stygian lake to enforce it. The noise of his wings makes the shores tremble, and is like a crashing whirlwind, such as tears down the trees and sends the peasants and their herds flying before it. The heavenly messenger touches the portals of the city with his wand ; they fly open—and he returns the way he came without uttering a word to the two poets. His face was that of one occupied by other thoughts. ... Another, who brings the souls of the departed across the ocean to the shore of Purgatory, is first discovered at a distance by the white splendours of his wings, with which, outspread as sails, he fans the air, standing erect on the high stern. As he approaches nearer it is impossible to look upon his face because of the brightness of it. .. Another angel has a face like the morning star, casting forth quivering beams. Another's presence affects the senses like the fragrance of a May morning ; and another is clothed in garments dark as cinder, but has a sword in his hand too dazzling for mortal eyes.' (Adapted from Leigh Hunt's *Stories from the Italian Poets*.) It is, of course, foolish to say that Milton's angels are in comparison 'commonplace.' They differ from Dante's angels as Raphael's St. Michael differs from the angels of Angelico. They are celestial Warriors in resplendent panoply, Seraphs girt with wings of downy gold and colours dipt in heaven, Titanic forms, which, as described in Tennyson's majestic lines,

Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armouries  
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean  
Rings to the roar of an angel onset.

1. 12. **His devils** .... This may be to some extent true of such brute-demons as Barbariccia and Draghignazzo, whose office it is, as mere menials, to inflict torment on the damned. Yet surely even they fill us, as they did Dante, with terror and unearthly awe ; anyhow, it certainly is not true in the case of such infernal Powers as the Furies, Minos, Geryon, or Satan himself.

1. 13. **His dead men**: The 'strange situations' in which the damned find themselves are often such that no living men could exist for a moment under such conditions. They suffer an intensity of never-ceasing torment which would be inconceivable in the case of a natural human body. By each gnashing of Satan's fangs the back of Judas Iscariot is stript of skin, which is instantly renewed in readiness for the next descent of the terrible teeth. Mahomet and the Schismatics are ever anew cleft from

head to navel by the sword of a demon, and the ghastly wound ever again heals up before they have made the circuit of their ‘doleful road.’ Other sinners at the bite of a serpent dissolve into ashes and immediately resume their human form, or undergo wondrous transformation, the man becoming reptile and the reptile assuming its victim’s form. Farinata’s natural body would not have endured for one instant the fiery glow of his red-hot sepulchre. Dante’s ‘dead men’ are *not* ‘living men in strange situations,’ but human souls placed amid supernatural surroundings, and clothed in phantom-shapes of their former earthly bodies. At the Day of Judgment each lost soul will return to earth to fetch the body in which once he lived and sinned. (See *Inf.* v. 102; x. 11; xiii. 103.) These phantom-shapes are not only capable of suffering, but suffer torments unendurable by the natural human body ; and although the human character, with all its passions, remains, its presence nowise lessens our sense of mystery and our ‘emotion of unearthly awe.’ Still less like those of ‘living men’ are the shadowless bodies of the spirits in Purgatory (see *Purg.* v., where Dante’s shadow causes such consternation) and the ‘lights’ and ‘splendours’ in which the souls of the Blest are veiled in Paradise.

The fact is that merely superficial points of contrast are presented, and for the most part wrongly presented, by Macaulay. If we look a little deeper we perceive at once that many of his statements are the exact converse of the truth. Dante’s angels, for instance, so far from being ‘good men with wings,’ are without just that which distinguishes a man from other beings : they have no human *character* whatever. Milton’s angels, on the other hand, differ from one another in character, as one ‘good man’ differs from another : the affable archangel Raphael from the regal and dignified Michael and the faithful Abdiel. Satan’s ‘moral and intellectual character’ (to which Mr. Stopford Brooke devotes so many pages of his little volume) is for many a topic of deep interest. It is the character of a bad man ‘writ large.’ Indeed, the point of strongest human interest in the *Paradise Lost* lies, if we may be allowed the paradox, in the character of Satan, whereas in the *Commedia* it is confined to human beings. And not only is it untrue that the human element in Dante’s poem ‘excludes mystery’ and renders impossible ‘any emotion of unearthly awe’ ; it is also untrue that the presence of this human element ‘is a fault’ in any other respect. Indeed it is just the absence of the true human element in the *Paradise Lost* which is its great defect. There is probably no one, however capable he may be of appreciating the greatness of Milton (not merely his ‘grand style,’ as Matthew Arnold has it), who does not in his heart feel that Dr. Johnson is mainly right when he says : ‘The plan of the *Paradise Lost* has this inconvenience, that it comprises neither human actions nor human manners. The man

and woman who act and suffer are in a state which no other man or woman can ever know. The reader finds no transaction in which he can be engaged ; beholds no condition in which he can by any effort of imagination place himself ; he has therefore little natural curiosity or sympathy. ... The want of human interest is always felt. *Paradise Lost* is one of the books which the reader admires and lays down, and forgets to take up again. None ever wished it longer than it is.<sup>1</sup> As Mr. Pattison says, Adam and Eve are 'exceptional beings' ; we cannot fully sympathise with them as with our fellow-creatures.

1. 14. *Farinata degli Uberti*. The Uberti were the principal Ghibelin family of Florence. Indeed they may be said to have been the originators of the Guelph and Ghibelin feud in Florence, for it was by the favour shown to them by Frederick II. that this papal and imperial feud was grafted on the internal discords of their city. In 1258 the Ghibelins were ejected, and took refuge in Siena. Two years later the Florentine Guelphs met them at Monte Aperto, near the river Arbia, and were routed with such immense loss that they did not dare to return to Florence. The victorious Ghibelins decreed that Florence should be razed to the ground, but Farinata opposed the decision, and saved his native city. Some six years later the Guelphs regained power, and held it for many years. Dante belonged to the Guelph party, and was Prior under their ascendancy (1300), but soon after was banished, and, after joining the Ghibelin exiles for a short time, left them in disgust, and 'formed a party for himself alone' (*Par. xvii. 68*). It does not seem quite clear why Dante places in Hell one to whom he owed gratitude for saving his 'bel sano Giovanni' and his beloved Florence. Boccaccio tells us that it was because his voluptuous habits entitled him to a place among the Epicurean heretics. These heretics suffer torture in the red-hot sepulchres of the City of Dis (see on p. 17, l. 33). From his sepulchre Farinata rises 'with breast and forehead erect, as if he held Hell in great disdain,' and accosts Dante. They converse about the great Feud and Florence, and Farinata prophesies Dante's banishment. (The date of the Vision is supposed to be 1300.)

1. 16. *auto-da-fé* (Portuguese), or *actus fidei* (Lat.), means literally an 'act of faith,' and is the expression by which the Inquisition tried to justify its human holocausts. Moloch priests and Druids doubtless had similar expressions.

1. 18. *Beatrice*, the daughter of Folco Portinari, whom Dante first saw and loved when he was a mere child. His passion for her is described in his *Vita Nuova*, where he recounts in prose and verse of wondrous beauty his yearnings and his visions. In 1290 Beatrice died. She had for some time been the wife of Simone de' Bardi ; and if the devotion of Dante had on this

account lost its less spiritual motives, much more was his love refined and elevated by her death. Of his anguish and despair he gives a vivid picture in the *Vita Nuova*. The storm of sorrow slowly passed, and he lifted his eyes to heaven and once more beheld her whom he loved, no longer such as he had known her on earth, but transfigured in the brightness of divine radiance. Henceforth his love and adoration is for her who, as the Revelation of Divine love, is to be his guide to Paradise. The *Vita Nuova* ends with the prayer 'that his spirit may go hence to behold the glory of his Lady, that is of the sainted Beatrice, who gloriously gazeth on the face of Him who is through all ages blessed.' His meeting with Beatrice in the Earthly Paradise (see note on p. 17, l. 4) is described in the 30th canto of the *Purgatory*.

- l. 27. *fee-faw-fum*: cf. Edgar's song in *King Lear* (iii. 4):  
 Child Ronald to the dark tower came,  
 His word was still: Fie foh and fum,  
 I smell the blood of a British man.

Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento in 1544. He was sent to study law at Padua, but (as Goethe) abandoned it for literature. When 18 years of age he published his poem *Rinaldo*. He was invited to Ferrara by the Prince Cardinal Luigi d'Este, whom he accompanied on a visit to Paris. On his return he lived at the court of Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, and there composed his *Aminta* (see on p. 15, l. 12) and his masterpiece *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, in which he describes the taking of Jerusalem by the Crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillon (1099). The poem was received with almost universal acclamation, but the Cruscan Academy criticised it severely, and Tasso, who was of an intensely sensitive and morbid nature, was so wounded that he recast the whole poem and published it under the title *La Gerusalemme Conquistata*. As he showed signs of insanity, Duke Alfonso had him placed under constraint. ['Tasso's cell,' which is shown to tourists, and which inspired the well-known lines in *Childe Harold*, is apocryphal. For one version of Tasso's insane conduct, see Goethe's drama *Tasso*.] After leaving Ferrara, he wandered about miserably through various regions of Italy, and died at Rome in 1595. His tomb is to be seen in the Church of Sant' Onofrio. The following stanzas from his Poem (iv. 4-7), translated by J. H. Wiffen, will illustrate what Macaulay calls the '*fee-faw-fum*' of Tasso. It would be unfair to judge the *Jerusalem* from this extract. It contains many passages of great beauty and vivid colouring, reminding one of paintings of the Venetian school. The lines describe a Council of Infernal Powers summoned by Satan.

The gods of the Abyss in various swarms  
 From all sides to the yawning portals throng,  
 Obedient to the signal—frightful forms,  
 Strange to the sight, unspeakable in song.

Death glares in all their eyes ; some prance along  
 On horny hoofs ; some, formidably fair,  
 Whose human faces have the viper's tongue,  
 And hissing snakes for ornamental hair,  
 Ride forth on dragon-folds that lash the lurid air.

There might you hear the Harpy's clangorous brood,  
 The Python's hiss, the Hydra's wailing yell,  
 Mad Scylla barking in her greedy mood,  
 And roaring Polypheme, the pride of Hell ;  
 Pale Gorgons, savage Sphinxes, Centaurs fell,  
 Geryons, Chimaeras breathing flakes of fire,  
 Figures conceptionless, innumerable,  
 Multiform shapes conjoined in monsters dire,  
 To the vast halls of Dis in hideous troops aspire.

They took their stations right and left around  
 The grisly king ; he, cruel of command,  
 Sate in the midst of them, and sourly frowned,  
 The huge rough sceptre waving in his hand.  
 No Alpine crag, terrifically grand,  
 No rock at sea in size with him could vie ;  
 Calpe and Atlas, soaring from the sand,  
 Seemed to his stature little hills—so high  
 Reared he his hornéd front in that Tartarean sky.

A horrid majesty in his fierce face  
 Struck deeper terror and increased his pride ;  
 His blood-shot eye-balls were instinct with rays  
 That like a baleful comet far and wide  
 Their fatal splendour shed on every side.  
 In rough barbaric grandeur his hoar beard  
 Flowed to his breast, and like the gaping tide  
 Of a deep whirlpool his grim mouth appeared,  
 When he unclosed his jaws, with foaming gore besmeared.

1. 27. **Klopstock** .... Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) was the son of Saxon parents who had settled at Quedlinburg, near the Harz mountains. Early in life he was incited by the writings of the Zürich 'Patriarch' Bodmer to attempt a path hitherto untried in German literature, and he chose Milton as his guide. At the age of 24 (in 1748) he published the first three books of his *Messias* (see on p. 16, l. 25). The work, which consists of 20 long books, was not completed till 1773. The first ten books describe Christ's ministry and death, the last ten are occupied with the Resurrection and Ascension, and contain much strange legendary matter. The 20th book is not written, as the rest in hexameters, but mostly consists of triumphal odes sung by angels at the Ascension. The *Messias* made a great sensation, but is now scarcely known, except by name, to any but literary students.

It is an example of a most ineffectual striving after sublimity. In it we find enormity without grandeur, magniloquence without dignity, and melodramatic effects which at times are but little removed from burlesque. But of what Macaulay calls 'fee-faw-fum,' there is, as far as I can remember, no trace in the Klopstock. The Fiends of the *Messias* are merely caricatures of the Fiends of the *Paradise Lost*. As in Milton's Poem, Satan is often described as assuming the form of a mist. [The description of Satan's return to Hell as a creeping mist and of his sudden revelation to Pandemonium, given in *Par. Lost*, x., is reproduced in the *Messias*, Bk. ii. 274 sq.]. Klopstock, however, makes his Infernal Powers representative of the Powers of Nature. Moloch is the god of the mountains; Beliebel of the desert; Magog of the Dead Sea.

They have just enough .... See the passage quoted on p. 19, l. 29, in which Macaulay asserts the same about Dante's supernatural beings.

1. 33. *dæmons*: is used here rather in the Greek sense of 'supernatural beings' than in the sense of the English word 'demons.' In Greek the word is often used to denote the gods themselves, but rather as 'divine Powers,' than as individual persons. Macaulay refers especially to the Furies (*Eumenides*) of *Æschylus*.

**Page 24, l. 8.** Osiris and his wife Isis were, Herodotus says, the only divinities worshipped by *all* the Egyptians. Osiris was possibly an ancient Egyptian king, who first introduced agriculture. He is said to have travelled into distant lands and to have taught many nations the arts of civilisation. On his return he was murdered by his brother Typhon. But Isis, with the assistance of her son Horus, regained the sovereignty. Osiris was sometimes worshipped under the form of a bull (see Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*). In later times he and Isis were identified with the Greek Dionysus and Demeter, and were also worshipped as the deities of the sun and moon. [The sacred bull Apis, or Mnevis, was probably more closely connected with the worship of the sun and Moloch rites, as human sacrifices were offered in his temple at Heliopolis.] The cult of Isis flourished at Rome under the Empire.

1. 9. *seven-headed idols*. Brahma, and also Siva, are often represented with multiplied heads and limbs—a symbol of omnipotence and omnipresence. I am not aware that there is any special 'seven-headed idol.'

1. 12. *Titans*: the twelve children of Uranus and Ge (Heaven and Earth). Uranus, the first ruler of the universe, threw some of his sons into Tartarus. Then, incited by their mother Ge (or Gaia), the Titans rose against their father, and set Cronos, one of their number, on the throne of heaven. Cronos, however, hurled

his brothers, the Cyclopes, back into Tartarus, and played the tyrant. It had been prophesied that Cronos should be dethroned by his own son. He accordingly swallowed all his children (Hera, Pluto, Poseidon, Demeter, and Hestia) as soon as they were born. The last child of Cronos and Rhea was Zeus. He was secreted by his mother in the Dictæan cave in Crete, and when he was full-grown he gave Cronos a potion which made him disgorge the children whom he had swallowed. With them Zeus made war on his father Cronos and the reigning Titans, and after a contest of ten years, having been furnished by the Cyclopes with thunderbolts, he overcame them and cast them into the abyss of Tartarus.

1. 14. *Prometheus*: son of the Titan Iapetus. According to Æschylus, Prometheus had aided Zeus against Cronos, but when the new king of the gods wished to extirpate the human race Prometheus prevented him. He, moreover, favoured mortals by depriving them of a knowledge of the future, and giving them hope or faith in its place. He taught them the arts, and brought down fire for them from heaven. Angered at these things, Zeus ordered Hephaestus (Vulcan) to chain Prometheus to a rock in Scythia. The play of Æschylus opens at the moment when Hephaestus, with two attendant 'daemons,' Strength and Force, is riveting the victim to the rock with adamantine fetters. He meanwhile utters no word; but, when they have departed, in his agony and indignation he calls upon the Powers of the Air and Earth and Ocean to view his sufferings. Ocean nymphs approach, and to them he recounts the story of his wrongs, and reiterates the threat that Zeus shall yet be cast from his throne, like Cronos, by his own offspring. Zeus sends Hermes (Mercury) to offer him terms and to persuade him to reveal the name of the future usurper. But Prometheus remains defiant, and is hurled down into Tartarus. This is the legend so far as it is related by Æschylus. There are other forms of it. After many ages Prometheus is said to have returned to the earth to endure new sufferings. He was chained to a rock on Mount Caucasus, and his liver, which ever grew afresh, was devoured by the eagle of Zeus. According to one legend, Hercules killed the eagle and released Prometheus; according to another Prometheus finally revealed the name of the future king of heaven. There is also a legend that Prometheus made the first man out of earth and water, and 'added to the primal clay a particle taken from every beast' (*Hor. Carm. i. 16*). This was either at the first creation of man, or after the Deluge of Drucalion. The myth is evidently of oriental origin, and is an expression of the widespread belief in a suffering mediator between mankind and an angry God. [Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* represents the overthrow of Jupiter by his own offspring, Demogorgon,—a terrific gloom. 'Awful shape, what art thou? Speak!' exclaims Jupiter. 'Eternity,' answers

the shadow. ‘Demand no direr name!’ Jupiter sinks into the abyss, in vain striving to wield his thunderbolts.] The resemblance of the Prometheus of Æschylus to Milton’s Satan is merely superficial. The motives that underlie the two characters are totally different—indeed, as different as Light from Darkness. For the character of Milton’s Satan, see especially Stopford Brooke’s *Milton* (pp. 138-149). It is a subject much discussed by all commentators on the *Paradise Lost*, e.g. Dr. Johnson, Addison, Prof. Masson, Mr. Pattison, Hallam (iv. 236), etc. Most of these combat Dryden’s remark that Satan is the real hero of the Poem. They show that his character rapidly degenerates, and that Milton ‘to mark the end of beauty which has ceased to be the expression of any goodness, turns Satan finally into the hideous dragon—a monstrous serpent on his belly prone’ (*Stopford Brooke*).

l. 30. against the sword of Michael.... See *Par. Lost*, vi., where ‘the sword of Michael from the armoury of God ... met the sword of Satan ... and in half cut sheer,’ and ‘deep entering, shared all his right side.’ The passage, especially the description of ‘the stream of nectarous humour ... such as celestial spirits may bleed,’ contains reminiscences of the passages in Homer where Mars and Cypris (Venus) are wounded. From the wound of Venus streams celestial ‘ichor.’

l. 35. nor even hope itself.... See the defiant addresses of Satan to Beelzebub in *Par. Lost*, i.

**Page 25, l. 5.** *idiosyncrasies*: lit. ‘private mixtures,’ i.e. peculiarities of mind or temperament. The word is perhaps better spelt ‘*idiosyncrasy*’ (from *κρίπτω* not *κράσις*), i.e. ‘peculiar composition’ or ‘constitutional peculiarity.’ Notice that its termination has no connection with the termination in ‘democracy.’

l. 6. beggars for fame.... The allusion is to such writers as Rousseau, who exposes the nakedness and sores of his mind in his *Confessions*. Possibly Macaulay includes Byron.

In the *Samson* Milton alludes frequently to his own fate. Indeed, Samson is Milton himself under rather transparent dramatic disguise. But in the *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, as also in the *Divina Commedia*, there are only a few passages in which the poets speak directly of themselves. The beautiful lines at the beginning of the third book of *Paradise Lost*, and the no less beautiful address to Urania at the beginning of the seventh book, are known to all. Dante touches rarely and briefly on his own fate, although, of course, the whole Poem is of an intensely personal character. In the *Inferno* Farinata and in the *Paradise* Cacciagnida prophesy Dante’s banishment, and he is told that he shall yet learn ‘how savoureth of salt another’s bread, and how hard a road is the going up and down

the stairs of others.' In another passage, he says, 'If e'er it happen that the Sacred Poem, to which both heaven and earth have set their hand, o'ercome the cruelty that bars me out ... as Poet I shall return, and at my baptismal font shall take the laurel crown.'

1. 12. **The character** .... The next five paragraphs form a connecting link between the two main topics of the Essay, viz. Milton's poetic genius and Milton's political views and conduct. Macaulay first contrasts Milton's character with that of Dante; he then refers to Milton's sonnets, in which 'his peculiar character is most strongly displayed'; and he then plunges into the discussion of his 'public conduct.'

1. 13. **loftiness ... intensity**: Carlyle (*Hero as Poet*) takes the same view of Dante: 'Perhaps one would say *intensity*, with the much that depends upon it, is the prevailing character of Dante's genius ... I know nothing so intense as Dante.' He has much to say that is worth reading on this *intensity* of Dante. What Macaulay exactly means by 'loftiness of thought' it is not easy to see. Milton's poetic conceptions are certainly on a larger scale and less defined than Dante's, but one can hardly say either that the general range of *thought* in the *Paradise Lost* is loftier than that of the *Paradiso*, nor that Milton's loftiest thoughts are so high as the loftiest in the *Commedia*.

1. 14. **In every line ... asperity**: This is, of course, an absurd exaggeration, and the following remarks are only equalled by Leigh Hunt's remarks on the 'bitterness' and 'morbidity' and 'raging littleness' of Dante, in his *Stories from Italian Poets*. 'I know not in the world,' says Carlyle, 'an affection equal to that of Dante.' 'The whole *Purgatorio*,' as Mr. Symonds tells us, 'is a monument to the beauty and tranquillity of Dante's soul. The whole *Paradiso* is a proof of its purity and radiance and celestial love. It is enough to mention the Confession of Charity in the 26th Canto of the *Paradiso*, and the prayer which opens the last canto; let a man read these in silence, meditate upon them, and then try to estimate the height and the depth of the riches of the love of Dante's heart.' Dante's Poem is indeed fraught with a stern and sad grandeur, but where shall we find in Milton's great Poem any trace of what Dean Church calls the 'thrilling tenderness' of many passages in the *Commedia*? Dante's nature, too, was indeed austere and melancholy; he was capable of the supremest pride and disdain and of hate for all that is vile and false: but in him all these had, as in all truly great men they have, their converse. Where in Milton's character can we trace a sign of any such humility as Dante's before Beatrice? any such intensity of love and grief? any such bitter remorse for sin? any such reverence for the divine? That in earlier days Milton was capable of love, and yearned for

sympathy, is true, but his great Poem, written, as Dante's, after he had suffered shipwreck of domestic happiness and political ambitions, shows no such tenderness as the *Commedia*.

1. 23. **Sardinian... honey**: In his *Ars Poetica* (376) Horace speaks of Sardinian honey as 'offensive.' There was a Latin proverb, 'more bitter than Sardinian honey.' Sardinian herbs were looked upon as being often poisonous. One of these, the 'herba Sardonica,' was said to produce a convulsive grin when tasted. Hence (probably) the expression 'a sardonic grin.' Modern Corsican honey is said to be tainted by yew-tree pollen.

1. 26. **land of darkness....** Quoted from *Job*, x. 22. The next sentence is a bit of windy rhetoric scarcely to be paralleled even from Macaulay's writings. One cannot but suspect that when he composed this essay he had nothing but the very slightest acquaintance with Dante's *Paradiso*. Indeed, he never learnt to appreciate it, and probably never read it except in a cursory fashion. In his *Criticism on Dante* he dismisses the *Paradiso* with a few remarks on its 'felicity of diction.' Many of the criticisms on Dante in the present Essay, even when they are not entirely wrong, lose a great deal more than half their force when we remember that the *Divina Commedia* does not merely consist of the *Inferno*, nor even of the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*.

1. 30. **All the portraits....** In his *Criticism on Dante*, written shortly before this Essay, Macaulay says: 'We think that we see him standing amidst those smiling and radiant spirits with that scowl of unutterable misery on his brow, and that curl of bitter disdain on his lips, which all his portraits have preserved, and which might furnish Chantrey with hints for the head of his projected Satan.' Boccaccio (about 1350) describes Dante thus: 'His face was long, his nose aquiline, his eyes rather large, his cheek-bones prominent; his lower lip protruded; his complexion was brown, his hair and beard thick, black, and curling. His face was always full of serious and pensive thoughts.' The only possibly genuine portrait of Dante extant—though, alas, hardly still extant—is the fresco on the wall of the Chapel of the Palazzo del Podestà (the 'Bargello') in Florence. It is believed to have been painted by Giotto, the great artist, who was a friend of Dante. It represents Dante at the prime of life—probably at the time of his Priorate (1300). The portrait of a political outlaw would hardly have been painted on the wall of a public building, so it seems likely that it was painted before Dante's exile in 1302. The pomegranate which he holds in his hand (unless it be a later addition) shows that Dante was already known, at least to his friends, as the poet of the *Inferno*—possibly of the first seven cantos; for Boccaccio tells us that Dante had written these cantos before his exile, and had abandoned the further task in despair. [The pomegranate was

the fruit whose ‘mortal taste’ compelled Proserpine to return to Hades.] For centuries this portrait of Dante was forgotten. It had been covered over with various coats of whitewash. In 1840 an American, Mr. Wilde, and an Englishman, Mr. Kirkup, incited thereto by the mention of the fresco by old writers, succeeded in discovering it. Marini, a Florentine painter, was afterwards commissioned to ‘restore’ it—a feat which he performed only too well, for but little of the original is now to be seen. Besides this portrait there exists a mask, which was taken (it is said) from a mould made on the face of Dante after death. A photograph of this mask is given by Mr. Symonds in his *Introduction*.<sup>1</sup> It represents an exceedingly noble face—such a face as we can well believe Dante’s to have been. There is in it none of that ‘haggard and woeful stare’ nor of that ‘sullen and contemptuous curve’ of which Macaulay speaks. ‘The mouth,’ as Mr. Symonds says, ‘is shut, as though silence or paucity of words habitually dwelt upon the lips. The cheeks are hollow—hollowed with the care of the task of many years. The whole face is very calm, and sad, and grave.’ Speaking of the Giotto portrait, Carlyle says: ‘To me it is a most touching face; perhaps of all faces that I know, the most so.... There is in it, as foundation of it, the softness, tenderness, gentle affection as of a child; but all this is as if congealed into sharp contradiction, into abnegation, isolation, proud hopeless pain. A soft ethereal soul looking out so stern and implacable, as from imprisonment of thick-ribbed ice! Withal it is a silent pain, too—a silent, scornful one: the lip is curled in a kind of god-like disdain of the thing that is eating out his heart.’

**Page 26, l. 2. in love.** For Milton’s unhappy experiences in love, see on p. 3, l. 8. ‘Of Gemma Donati, Dante’s wife, little is known besides the fact that she bore him five sons and two daughters. He never mentions her or his children, and she did not accompany him in his exile. But although Dante’s marriage was probably not a source of happiness to him, there seems no warrant for believing the statements of Landino and others, who represent Gemma as a veritable Xanthippe.’ (*Selections from the Inferno*.)

**l. 6. entrance into life.** Milton returned from Italy in 1639, during the Scotch troubles and shortly before the outbreak of civil war in England; but for the next ten years, though he was known as the author of political pamphlets, he was, as Mr. Pattison says, ‘so little personally known, living as he did the

<sup>1</sup> Scartazzini, who is one of the most learned of modern Dante scholars, believes neither in the Bardello portrait nor the mask. He says that no genuine portrait of Dante exists. Mr. Haselfoot, the translator of Dante, tells me that ‘in the lower church of the Monastery at Assisi there is an undoubted work of Giotto, in which one of the figures is said to represent Dante; but,’ he adds, ‘I fail to find any likeness in it.’

life of a retired student, that it was the accident of his having the acquaintance of one of the new council (Vane) to which he owed his appointment as Latin Secretary. I conclude, therefore, that Macaulay means Milton's entrance into public life at his appointment (1649) to this post. He was then just over forty years of age. Of the penal statutes against the Puritans after the Restoration Macaulay says: 'It was made a crime to attend a dissenting place of worship. A single justice might convict without a jury, and might for the third offence pass sentence for transportation beyond the seas for seven years. With refined cruelty it was provided that the offender should not be transported to New England, where he was likely to find sympathizing friends.... The gaols were soon crowded with dissenters' (*Hist.* ii.). Many Puritans, both before and after the Protectorate, had voluntarily migrated—some, as the Pilgrim Fathers, to America, others to Holland and Switzerland.

l. 10. **licentious scribblers**: In his *History* (ch. iii.) Macaulay says: 'Of that generation, from Dryden down to Durfey, the common characteristic was hard-hearted, shameless, swaggering licentiousness.' For a description of the state of literature during the Restoration, see this chapter and Green's *Hist.* ix., Sec. i. Macaulay well says 'the profligacy of the English plays, satires, songs, and novels of that age is a deep blot on our national fame.' In men such as Wycherley, Green says, Milton found types for the Belial of his great poem, 'than whom a spirit more lewd fell not from heaven.'

l. 11. **pandar**: rightly so spelt, as it is really 'Pandar' or 'Pandarus.' In Homer Pandarus is a Lycian archer who, at the instigation of Athena, breaks the truce between the Greeks and Trojans by discharging an arrow at Menelaus (*Iliad*, iv.) The rôle that Pandarus plays in later literature (as in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*) gives the name its present meaning. This Pandarus is the uncle of Chryseis, or Cressida. The story in which he takes such a disgraceful part is related in the *Diary of the Trojan War*, professedly written by Dictys of Crete, a warrior in the Trojan war. [For the strange story of the discovery of this old ms., see Smith's *Classical Dict.*].

style of a bellman, i.e. vulgar vociferation.

l. 14. **rabble of Comus**: see on p. 12, l. 32.

l. 26. **sedate and majestic patience** . With more 'asperity' than seems quite consistent with the gospel of 'sweetness and light,' Matthew Arnold retorts: 'And Milton's temper! His "sedate and majestic patience"; his freedom from "asperity"! If there is a defect which, above all others, is signal in Milton, which injures him intellectually, which limits him as a poet, it is the defect common to him with the whole Puritan party to which he belonged—the fatal defect of *temper*. He and they may

have a thousand merits, but they are *unamiable*. Excuse them how one will, Milton's asperity and acerbity, his want of sweetness of temper, of the Shakspearian largeness and indulgence, are undeniable.' Certainly there is nothing to be found in Dante's *De Monarchia*, nor even in the *Inferno*, which for an instant can be compared with the mean personalities and scurrilous vituperation of Milton's *Defensio* and other of his political diatribes—to say nothing of some of the sonnets.

1. 32. **loaded with literary distinctions.** This is a rather exaggerated description of the courteous reception given to Milton by continental men of letters—with whom he exchanged, as the custom then was, verse compositions. He visited in Paris the celebrated Dutch author and diplomatist, Grotius (Hugo Groot), and at Arcetri, near Florence, saw the still more celebrated Galileo. At Florence he was welcomed by 'many noble and learned men, whose private academies,' he says, 'I assiduously attended.' Two of these addressed eulogies to him. 'Carlo Dati,' says Dr. Johnson, 'presented him with an encomiastic inscription in the tumid lapidary style, and Francini wrote him an ode, of which the first stanza is only empty noise ... but the last is natural and beautiful.' In Rome he became acquainted with Lucas Holstenius, the librarian of the Vatican, and here also the learned wrote verses to welcome him. At Naples he enjoyed the hospitality of Manso, who had formerly befriended Tasso (see on p. 23, l. 27).

1. 33. **patriotic hopes . . .** 'His purpose was now,' says Dr. Johnson, 'to have visited Sicily and Greece; but hearing of the differences between the king and parliament, he thought it proper to hasten home . . . Let not our veneration for Milton forbid us to look with some degree of merriment on great promises and small performance, on the man who hastened home because his countrymen are contending for their liberty, and, when he reaches the scene of action, vapours away his patriotism in a private boarding-school.' This rather ribald remark has caused much resentment among Milton's later biographers; but it need not be taken too seriously. Poor Dr. Johnson himself felt severely what he calls being 'degraded to a schoolmaster,' and yet even he allows that teaching is 'an act which no wise man will consider in itself as disgraceful.' The truth seems to be that Milton was not thus 'degraded' by force of circumstances. He voluntarily undertook the tuition of his two nephews, John and Edward Phillips, and, finding himself interested in the question of education, received other pupils into his house. Green, however, remarks: 'The grace and geniality of his youth disappeared in the drudgery of a schoolmaster's life.' The success of Milton as an educator of youth does not seem to have been great—a fact not to be wondered at. It is more than possible that their stern, unsympathis-

ing, over-exacting tutor did much to develop the innate folly of his nephews: as to whose later performances see Pattison's *Milton*, p. 134. For Milton's *Tract on Education* see on p. 54, l. 26.

**l. 35. poor:** At the Restoration Milton forfeited a house in Westminster, worth £60 a year, and £2000 which he had invested in Government (Protectorate) securities, and seems to have lost a like sum through mismanagement of his affairs. His house in Bread Street was burnt during the Great Fire of London. He was thus reduced to narrow circumstances, but was able to live upon his income and to leave £1500. Green, however, says: 'As age drew on, he found himself reduced to comparative poverty, and driven to sell his library for subsistence.'

**sightless:** It is not certain what disease destroyed Milton's eyesight. In *Par. Lost*, iii. 25, he speaks of 'a drop serene' (*gutta serena* or amaurosis), or 'dim suffusion' (cataract). The eyes remained, as he tells us in his Sonnet (xix.) to Cyriack Skinner, 'clear of blemish or of spot' although 'bereft of light,' and in his second *Defensio* he says: 'my eyes are externally uninjured. They shine with an unclouded light, just like the eyes of one whose vision is perfect.' His eyes had begun to fail in 1649, at the time when he was appointed Latin Secretary. His intense application to his official duties and private reading increased the malady. Green says (viii. x.), that he was made Secretary 'in spite of a blindness that had been brought on by the intensity of his study'; Carlyle, probably with more accuracy, speaks of him as having fallen blind in the Public Service' (*Cromwell*, iv., p. 5). Total blindness ensued in 1652, in the forty-fourth year of his life.

**disgraced:** 'Parliament ordered his books to be burnt by the common hangman; he was for a time imprisoned, and even when released he had to live amidst threats of assassination from fanatical Cavaliers' (Green, viii. x.). Dr. Johnson says: 'Milton was not seized, nor perhaps very diligently pursued.... He is said to have had friends in the House.' For a full account of Milton's escape see Masson's *Life*, vi. 185 sq. It seems that he was arrested and kept in custody for a short time.

**l. 36. hovel:** This is again a dab of rather crude colour. Ariosto, if I remember right, was asked why he spent money in building himself a house, seeing that with a few strokes of his pen he could build magnificent castles. The probability is that Milton was quite content with the castles of his imagination—and all the more so as he was totally blind. Macaulay's ideas—and experiences—were of a different nature. Milton seems to have lived in very fair comfort, constantly entertaining visitors of distinction and learning, in his little house in Artillery Walk during his last ten years. He died there (of 'gout struck in,' as

it was diagnosed by the physicians of the day) on Sunday, 8th November, 1674, and was buried in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate. ‘The disgusting profanation of the leaden coffin, and dispersion of the poet’s bones by the parochial authorities, during the repair of the church in 1790, has been denied, but it is to be feared the fact is too true’ (*Pattison*).

**Page 27, l. 2.** at a time of life .... ‘*Paradise Lost* was composed after fifty, but was conceived at thirty-two. Hence the high degree of perfection realised in the total result’ (*Pattison*). In the well-known ‘Trinity College Manuscript’ (at Cambridge) we have a list of nearly 100 subjects—partly Scriptural, partly taken from English History—which had occurred to Milton as possible subjects for the great epic to which in quite early years he determined to devote his best talents. Of some of these subjects he gives us in the ms. slight sketches, and of *Paradise Lost* there are four drafts. [Dr. Johnson gives two of these in full.] The date of the Cambridge ms. is 1641.—He began the actual composition of the Poem (though some passages may have been written earlier) in 1658, and it was completed in 1667. *Faust* was first conceived by Goethe when he was about 25 years old, and he put the last touches to it (the Second Part) the year before his death, aged 82.

**l. 7. Theocritus:** for his *Idylls* see on p. 16, l. 6. Theocritus was a native of Syracuse. He visited Alexandria about 280 B.C., during the reign of Ptolemy I. (Soter), who had become king of Egypt on the death of Alexander the Great. Here he studied literature and began to distinguish himself as a poet. He then returned to Syracuse, which was at that time ruled by Hiero II. Possibly dissatisfied with his reception by Hiero, or disgusted at the political state of Syracuse, he seems to have withdrawn into the country and to have devoted himself to writing pastoral (bucolic) poetry. His *Idylls* are so called because they give little ‘pictures’ of country life. (The word Idyll means a ‘little picture, or image,’ and is derived from the same root as ‘idol.’) They are not merely descriptive, but contain a considerable dramatic element, not without almost Shakspearian touches of humour. They have but little in common with the sentimental pastoral poems and Arcadian romances of later ages.

**Ludovico Ariosto** (1474-1533), son of the governor of Reggio, in S. Italy, studied at Ferrara, where he devoted himself to Spanish and French romantic literature (such as *Amadis of Gaul*: see p. 19, l. 14). Under the patronage of the Cardinal Ippolito d’Este and the Duke of Ferrara he wrote his *Orlando Furioso*, a poem in 46 cantos, in which he continues the story of Boiardo’s *Orlando Innamorato*. Boiardo’s poem describes a (fabulous) siege of Paris by the Saracens during the reign of Charlemagne. He makes his hero Orlando in love with a fascinating damsel Angelica,

who in Ariosto's poem marries a young noble, Medoro—an act which results in Orlando's madness. Ariosto's poetry shows a 'fine and healthful sense' for nature.

**l. 11. his conception of love . . .** In his criticism on the *Paradise Lost*, Addison says: 'The speeches of these two lovers flow equally from passion and sincerity. The professions they make to one another are full of warmth, but at the same time founded on truth. In a word, they are the gallantries of Paradise.' For Milton's views about, and conduct towards women see note on p. 3, l. 8. The remark quoted there from Dr. Johnson, 'hits the truth much better,' according to Matthew Arnold (*French Critic*) than Macaulay's rather absurd statement. It is, indeed, not easy to see how any conception can possibly combine what he here states was combined in Milton's conception of love.

**l. 21. the Sonnets of Milton** are dismissed by Dr. Johnson with the following remarks: 'They deserve not any particular criticism; for of the best it can only be said that they are not bad; and perhaps only the 8th and the 21st are truly entitled to this slender commendation . . .' Again, when speaking of Milton's second wife, Catherine Woodcock, he says: 'She died within a year . . . and her husband has honoured her memory with a poor sonnet.' This is the sonnet beginning 'Methought I saw my late espoused wife,' which by many is looked upon as the most beautiful and perfect sonnet in the English language, in spite of Hallam's amazing criticism (ii. 5) that it 'begins in pedantry and ends in conceit.' For the sake of those who may not possess the book, I append Mr. Stopford Brooke's remarks on Milton's sonnets:

'The sonnets of Milton belong mainly to the period of his prose writings. The ideal sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines distributed into two systems. The first system consists of the first eight lines, and should be complete in itself; the second system, of the six remaining lines. The eight lines ought to have only two rhymes, and these rhymes are arranged in a fixed order. The first, fourth, fifth, and eighth lines must rhyme with each other. After the first system, at which there is a pause in the thought, the second system of six lines ought only to have two rhymes. This is the perfect sonnet. But sonnet writers, especially in English, where rhymes are not so numerous as in Italian, allow themselves liberties. The sonnet arose in Italy. Wyatt brought it from Italy to England and wrote it more strictly than Surrey, who relaxed it. The poets who followed were content to interchange its rhymes as they pleased, provided that the whole poem consisted of fourteen lines. Spenser and Shakspere adopted each a special type, and established it. They both use three quatrains with a pause in the sense after each, and then a couplet at the close, which epigrammatically resumes

or points the thought of the sonnet. But Spenser uses only five rhymes, while Shakspere uses seven. In both, the rhymes are alternate in the three quatrains, but Spenser makes the last rhyme of the first quatrain begin the second, and the last of the second begin the third. His form, then, has less rhymes than Shakspere's, but it is less compact in the parts. Both, as well as Drummond, who kept nearly to the Italian form, held to the rhyming couplet at the close, which was an abomination in critical eyes. Milton uses it but once in his English sonnets. Milton brought back the sonnet to its original and strict type, the type that Petrarch fixed. He calls his first sonnet a composition in the Petrarchian stanza. The first was written on leaving Cambridge, the second at Horton. Five Italian sonnets and a canzone follow, and were written in Italy. The eighth was written in 1642, and the last sixteen when he had entered into the noises of his controversial career. Then (as Wordsworth says)

In his hand  
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains.

Johnson said, 'three of them were not bad ; that Milton's was a genius that could hew a colossus out of a rock, but could not carve heads on cherry-stones.' It is a strange judgment. If anything is remarkable in Milton's sonnets it is their noble manner.

*Four were written to women.* Because Milton was bitter against the bad woman in Dalila, because he held strong views on the supremacy of man, it has been too much forgotten how much he loved and honoured women. The Lady in *Comus* will not be used to support the theory that he despised women though he made them inferior to men : she is as noble in intellect as in purity. All through *Paradise Lost*, Eve's intelligence is only less than Adam's : she has many fine qualities, mostly the poetic ones, which Adam has not, and even after her fall the reverence of Adam for her is insisted on. His love for her never fails ; it is made supreme. And here, in the sonnets, he sketches, with all the care and concentration the sonnet demands, and each distinctively, four beautiful types of womanhood—the 'virgin wise and pure' ; the noble matron, 'honoured Margaret' ; the Christian woman, his friend, whose 'works, and alms, and good endeavour' followed her to the pure immortal streams ; the perfect wife, whom he looked to see in heaven :

Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shine  
So clear, as in no face with more delight.

*The personal sonnets* have great and solemn beauty, the beauty that belongs to the revelation of a great spirit. We may well compare the first sonnet, with its quiet self-confidence, its

resolved humility, its aspiration to perform the great Task-master's work, with the sonnet written, twenty years after, on his blindness, in 1652. It looks back over many sorrows and tumults to the earlier one; and, depressed by his blindness, he thinks how little has been, and may now be done; but deep religious patience helps him to think that God works, and that

They also serve who only stand and wait.

Not less noble in thought, not less stately in expression, but full of the veteran's consciousness of work, is the sonnet written three years later to Cyriack Skinner, also on his blindness. He does not bate one jot of hope, but steers right onward. What supports him—having lost his eyes?

The conscience, friend, to have lost them overpli'd  
In liberty's defence, my noble task.

These three sonnets read together and dated 1631, 1652, 1655, bring together three aspects of Milton's nature and two divisions of his life. The sonnet written when the Assault was intended to the City, and three others, written to Lawes, and Mr. Lawrence, and Cyriack Skinner, may also be called personal. They show Milton in his artist nature as the poet who knew his own worth; as the lover of music and as the musician; the lover of Italy, of Dante's poem, and of Tuscan airs; the bright and tender friend; the lover of cheerful society; the lover of classic verse. No sonnets in the English tongue come nearer than those to Lawrence and Cyriack Skinner to the mingled festivity and serious grace of Horace, and their religious spirit, graver than that of Horace, makes them Miltonic.

Of the *political sonnets*, the finest is that to Cromwell. Those to Fairfax and Vane are 'noble odes,' but the ode to Cromwell is written like an organ song by Handel in his triumphant hour. More solemn still, and justly called a psalm, is the stern and magnificent summons to God to avenge his slaughtered saints, slain by the bloody Piedmontese. It is harsh, some have said; nay, it is of great Nature herself: it has *a voice whose sound is like the sea*.

The following fine lines are from Wordsworth's Sonnet beginning 'Scorn not the Sonnet':

The Sonnet glitter'd, a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, call'd from Faery-land  
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp  
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

1. 24. *Filicaja* (1642-1707) was an Italian jurist and poet. His chief poetical work was a series of six odes on the siege of Vienna

by the Turks in 1683, and its deliverance by Sobieski. Of his sonnets, one especially, known as *Italia mia*, is celebrated.

1. 25. For Petrarch see on p. 9, l. 22.

1. 31. that beautiful face: the face of his 'late espoused saint' (Sonnet XXIII.), his second wife, Catharine Woodcock. Macaulay has forgotten that Milton expressly says 'her face was veiled,' and

to my fancied sight,

Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined,  
So clear as in no face with more delight.

He had probably never seen her face, though his dream brought him a vision of what he hoped to behold 'in heaven without restraint.'

1. 35. Anthology means literally a 'collection of flowers.' The first Greek Anthology consisted of epigrams collected (and some of them composed) by Meleager, a cynic philosopher who lived in Palestine about 60 B.C. It was known as the 'Garland of Meleager.' This was largely supplemented by later collectors, who added not only a vast number of epigrams, but also minor poems of various kinds. The last Anthology was compiled by Planudes, a learned monk who lived at Constantinople during the later age of the Eastern Empire (1300-1350). Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1453). This was accepted as the Great Anthology until, in 1606, Salmasius (Milton's adversary) discovered in the library of the Electors Palatine, at Heidelberg, the MS. of a still greater, compiled by Constantius Cephalas, of whom we know nothing, but who is supposed to have lived in the 10th century. It was removed to the Vatican library in 1623, but was restored to Heidelberg after the peace of 1815.

1. 36. Collects. According to Comber (in his *Companion to the Temple*), Collects are so called either because their contents are collected from the Gospel and Epistle for the day, or else because they are read to the fully collected congregation, or (and this view he adopts) because they are used 'so near the time of making the collection.' The first explanation is doubtless the right one. 'Macaulay,' says Mr. Pattison, 'compared the sonnets in their majestic severity to the Collects. They remind us of a Hebrew psalm, with its undisguised outrush of rage, revenge, exultation, or despair.'

Liturgy meant originally a 'personal service to the state' undertaken by the wealthier Athenian citizens. These duties were either 'encyclic' (annual), such as contributing to the support of gymnasiums, theatres, etc., or extraordinary, such as building and maintaining battleships in time of war ('trierarchy'). In the Septuagint the (Greek) word is used for sacrificial and other service. In earlier Christian writers it generally denotes the Eucharist.

**Page 28, l. 1. Massacres of Piedmont:** ‘As Oliver could not get what he wanted from Spain, he offered (1655) his alliance to France. ... Freedom of religion was to be accorded to Englishmen in France. Before any treaty had been signed, news arrived that the Duke of Savoy had sent his soldiers to compel his Vaudois subjects to renounce their religion, which was similar to that of the Protestants, though it had been embraced by them long before Luther’s Reformation. These soldiers committed terrible outrages amongst the peaceful mountaineers. Those who escaped the sword were carried off as prisoners, or fled to the snow-mountains, where they perished of cold and hunger. Milton’s voice was raised to plead for them. Cromwell at once told Mazarin that, if he cared for the English alliance, this persecution must stop. Mazarin put pressure on the Duke of Savoy, and liberty of worship was secured to the Vaudois’ (*Gardiner*).

**l. 9. directly egotistical:** Macaulay uses the word ‘egotistical’ not in its more modern meaning of ‘conceitedly or selfishly assertive,’ but of writers who (as he says, p. 25, l. 4) ‘obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers,’ i.e. give direct expression to their own opinions and feelings. [A ‘subjective’ dramatist does this indirectly, through his characters.] There is a difference between ‘egotism’ and ‘egoism,’ which the following quotations will explain: ‘The gentlemen of Port Royal, who were more eminent for their learning and their humility than any other in France, banished the way of speaking in the first person out of all their works, as rising from vainglory and self-conceit. To show their particular aversion to it, they branded this form of writing with the name of an *egotism*; a figure not to be found among ancient rhetoricians’ (*Spectator*, 562).

‘Descartes was uncertain of everything but his own existence and the existence of the operations and ideas of his own mind. Some of his disciples remained at this stage of his system, and got the name of *egoists*’ (*Reid*). Richard Baxter (co-temporary with Descartes) speaks of ‘that kind of sceptism called *egomism*.’ [It is also in French sometimes spelt *egomisme*.]

**l. 19. Oromasdes and Arimanes:** In his *Criticism on Dante* (1824) Macaulay had already written: ‘the fact is that Dante and Petrarch have been the Oromasdes and Arimanes of Italian literature.’ Zoroastes (Zerdusht in modern Persian) or Zarathustra, as he is called in the Zendavesta (the sacred books of the ancient Persians), is regarded as a mythical personage, but is said to have founded, or reformed, the religion which the Medes probably derived from the Chaldaeans or old Babylonians (Accadians). Of this religion the Magi (the ‘wise men’ of *Mauth*. ii. 1) were the high priests. Under the Median empire the Magi had great political power, but on account of their intrigues against the Persian dynasty many of them were

massacred by Darius (520 B.C.). The survivors and their descendants retained only the priestly authority.

The worship of Light and of the Sun-god (Mithras) was the first principle of the Zoroastrian religion. Among the Persians (in distinction from the Hindus) the conflict between Light and Darkness was accepted as a symbol of the conflict between Good and Evil, and thence arose a theological system in which Ormuzd (in the older idiom, Ahura-Mazda) was the cause of all good, and dwelt in perfect light, while Ahriman (or Angra-Mainyas) was the author of all evil, and dwelt in utter darkness. [Inscriptions of Darius mention Aura, or Auromazda, and Plato and Aristotle knew of these two Powers.] By the opposition of these two adverse powers the visible universe was as it were held in balance—a theory which doubtless occurs to many who are entirely ignorant of the Zoroastrian doctrine :

Darkness and Light ! Two powers in opposition  
Fiercely coercing each the other's might,  
Yet through their adverse forces' coalition,  
Creating all the universe of sight.

This fierce contest raged for 3000 years between the two Powers and the spirits that each created. Then a truce was concluded, and in despair Ahriman plunged down into the nether darkness, so that for the next 3000 years Ormuzd reigned supreme, and during this period created the heavens and the earth and all living things. In heaven he placed 486,000 stars, arrayed as an army :

Planets their mercenary splendours lent,  
And irresistible the vast armament  
Burst on the realm of Darkness.

The first two human beings, Urtier and Gayomard, were destroyed by Ahriman. Ormuzd then created Meshia and Meshiane, who fell a prey to the temptations of Ahriman, the results of their Fall being hunger, sleep, old age, disease, and death. From the Creation the world was destined to last 12,000 years. Not till the end of the 3rd quarter could Ormuzd venture to send his great prophet Zoroaster, who, according to most accounts, appeared about 7000 B.C. In his 30th year Zoroaster was summoned before Ormuzd and received instructions and miraculous powers. The Divine Word with which Zoroaster was armed acted as a sword to smite the evil spirits (*Dévs*) of Arimanes. Every thousandth year a new prophet was promised, the chief of whom was to be Sosiosh, of the lineage of Zoroaster, and the son of a virgin. Finally, Ahriman will be utterly overthrown, and Ormuzd will gather the whole human race into the perfect light in which he dwells. As Matthew Arnold justly says, in this Puritan and Royalist conflict there was 'a good deal of Arimanes on both sides' (*French Critic*).

**I. 25. American forests:** The reference is especially to the liberation of the South American colonies from the yoke of Spain. Bolivar, the 'Liberator of South America,' had in 1824 freed N. Peru—called, after him, Bolivia—and was, when Macaulay wrote his *Essay*, dictator of the new Republic. For further details, see p. 42, l. 25.

**Greece:** For nearly 2000 years, *i.e.* ever since B.C. 146, when it was completely subjugated by the Romans, Greece had remained enslaved to various masters (the Goths, Alaric and his Visigoths, the Venetians, and lastly the Turks) until the war of Liberation (1821-1829). Being repelled by the Greeks at Missolonghi in Etolia, and having lost many men in Argolis, the Turks appealed for help to Egypt. In 1824 (the year in which Byron died at Missolonghi) the Egyptian general, Ibrahim Pasha, conquered Crete, and in 1825 (the year of the *Essay*) landed in the Peloponnese and committed terrible atrocities. Missolonghi and Athens were soon afterwards reduced by the Turks. At this juncture Canning appealed for support to Russia, and an agreement was made that Greece should receive autonomy, but should remain subject to tribute. The war, however, continued. In 1827 a large Turkish and Egyptian fleet landed men at Navarino (near the ancient Pylos) in the Peloponnese, and Ibrahim renewed his wholesale devastations. A combined fleet of English, French, and Russian ships entered the Bay of Navarino (where some 22 centuries before the Athenians and Lacedæmonians had struggled so fiercely for mastery), and the whole of the Turk-Egyptian fleet was destroyed or captured.

**I. 34. large portion of his countrymen:** At the time when Macaulay wrote his *Essay*, the long supremacy of Toryism, which had been confirmed by the abhorrence at the French revolution and the struggle with Napoleon, was beginning to give way; such occurrences as the 'Manchester Massacre,' and such legislation as the 'Six Acts,' were beginning to open the eyes of many to the necessity of reform; in Spain, Italy, Greece, and South America, revolution had raised its standard; in English literature, Byron, Shelley, Jeremy Bentham, and (in his earlier years) Wordsworth, had come forward as champions for liberty and justice. But a large portion of the nation, as Macaulay says, still held the doctrine of 'non-resistance' to constituted authority, if not that of the Divine Right of Kings, and to such men Milton's principles, if not his poetical writings, were anathema. Dr. Johnson was accepted as the one authoritative critic of Milton; and he had asserted that 'Milton's republicanism was founded in an envious hatred of greatness, and a sullen desire of independence. ... He hated monarchs in the state, and prelates in the church; for he hated all whom he was required to obey. It is to be suspected that his predominant desire was to destroy.'

rather than to establish, and that he felt not so much the love of liberty as repugnance to authority.'

**Page 29, l. 1. the lion :** The fable relates how a man, in order to prove to a lion the superior strength of a human being, pointed to a statue representing a man strangling a lion. 'If lions could make statues,' was the reply, 'the man would be lying under the lion's paw.'

**l. 7. Mrs. Hutchinson :** *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson by his Widow, Lucy.* 'The figure of Colonel Hutchinson, one of the Regicides, stands out from his wife's canvas with the grace and tenderness of a portrait by Vandyck.' See Green's *Hist.* VIII. i.

**l. 8. Thomas May** (1594-1659) wrote plays and translations (of Virgil and Lucan), and during the Civil War was secretary to the Parliament. He gives a vivid description of the massacres by the Catholics in Ireland after the fall of Strafford (1641). His *History of the Parliament of England which began Nov. 5, 1640* (the 'Long Parliament'), was published in 1647.

**l. 10. Ludlow :** *Memoirs of General Ludlow.* In his description of what he calls the 'New Tyranny' (the Protectorate), Green says: 'Sterner work had to be done before Ireland could be brought into real union with its sister kingdoms. The work of conquest had been continued by Ireton, and completed after his death by General Ludlow, as mercilessly as it had begun' (VIII. x.).

**l. 11. John Oldmixon** (1673-1724), 'a violent Whig writer and narrow-minded literary critic' (Morley). He translated Tasso's *Aminta*, and wrote an opera called *Lore's Paradise*. Later in life he turned to history, and wrote a *Critical History of England* and *Memoirs of Ireland from the Restoration*.

**l. 12. Catharine Macaulay** (1731-1791) wrote a *History of England from the Accession of James I. to that of the House of Brunswick*, which, in its day, produced a sensation comparable to that which some 80 years later was caused by the History of her great namesake. Catharine Macaulay (*née* Sawbridge) was the wife of a Scotch doctor resident in London. In her History and in other numerous writings on political, social, and philosophical questions, she took a very strong radical line, and exposed herself to a great amount of indignation and satire, which took an unusually personal form on account of her *outré* behaviour and affectation of juvenile dress and habits when well on in years. 'Better redder her cheeks,' growled Dr. Johnson, 'than blacken other people's characters.' At the age of 47 she married again—this time a young man (Graham) of 22: an act that so enraged the rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, who had conceived a platonic affection for her, and had erected her statue (the arm

gracefully resting on her History) within the altar-rails of his church, that he had the statue demolished. Such men as Pitt, Horace Walpole, Gray, and Hume praised her History highly, and Mirabeau suggested its translation into French. In her book on the *Rights of Women*, Mary Wollstonecraft calls her 'the woman of the greatest abilities that this country has produced.' Lecky in his *History* says she was 'the ablest writer of the new radical school.'

1. 16. Clarendon: Edward Hyde, a leader of the Anti-presbyterian party in the Long Parliament, was made Lord Chancellor after the Restoration, and was created Earl of Clarendon. After his fall in 1667 he retired to France, and died at Rouen in the same year as Milton (1674). His daughter, Anne Hyde, was the first wife of James II. (when Duke of York), and the mother of Mary of Orange and Queen Anne. His *History of the Rebellion* was first published in 1702. He also left in MS. an *Account of his Life*, written for his children. This was afterwards given by his heirs to the University of Oxford, and published in 1759.

David Hume: (1711-1776) in the earlier part of his life, wrote mostly on philosophical and political subjects (on *Human Nature*, the *Principles of Morals*, *Political Discourses*, etc.), and it was not till 1752, when Librarian of the Advocate's Library at Edinburgh, that his attention was directed to history. His *History of England from the Invasion of Julius Casar to the Revolution of 1688* was written piecemeal—the latter portions first—and was completed in 1761. In 1763-6 he was Secretary to the British Legation in Paris and Chargé d'Affaires. On his return he brought with him Rousseau, who was made much of in England, and pensioned by George II. But Rousseau quarrelled with Hume, and left England after a stay of 13 months. Between 1767 and 1769 Hume was an Under-Secretary of State. He then retired to Edinburgh, where he died in 1776.

1. 32. primary principles . . . Although Macaulay 'relinquishes the vantage ground' which a discussion of these primary principles would have given him, the following facts and remarks may not seem out of place. They are taken mainly from Hallam's *Literary History*. In the sixteenth century the doctrines of the right of rebellion and tyrannicide on the one hand, and of passive obedience and the irresponsibility of Princes to contract and constitutional or moral law (as set forth by Machiavelli) on the other, had been alternately assumed by the two great religious parties of Europe, according to the necessity in which they stood for such weapons. But a reaction against democratic and regicidal theories set in, and the assassination (in 1610) of the French King, Henry IV., strengthened it. Political writings at the beginning of the seventeenth century assumed a more historical and objective character, and the general feeling

was in favour of Monarchy with constitutional safeguards. ‘But in England, about the beginning of the reign of James I., a different theory gained ground with the church. It was assumed, for it did not admit of proof, that a *patriarchal* authority had been transferred by primogeniture to the heir-general of the human race; so that kingdoms were but enlarged families, and an indefeasible right of monarchy was attached to their natural chief, which devolved upon the representative of the first sovereign who could be historically proved to have reigned in any nation.’ This ‘patriarchal theory,’ which sets aside the idea of any contract, with mutual obligations, between king and people, was shown (by Suarez, Grotius, Hobbes, and others) to be absurd; for patriarchal authority is founded on natural fatherhood, whereas kingship is, even in the case of the chief of a tribe, founded on Contract. These writers differ considerably in their views of the nature of this Contract, some asserting and others denying that the rights and obligations are hereditary, some propounding the doctrine of ‘non-resistance,’ and others allowing the right of rebellion. For details, consult Hallam (iii. 4), and for a rather radical view of the matter, see Gardiner’s *Puritan Revolution* (i. 2).

Page 30, l. 12. **William Laud**, Archbishop of Canterbury (1633) impeached by Pym at the opening of the Long Parliament, imprisoned together with Strafford in 1640, executed in 1645. For his life and character, see Gardiner and Green. ‘What he lacked was broad human sympathy and respect for the endeavour of each earnest man to grow towards perfection in the way which seems to him to be best. Men were to obey for their own good, and to hold their tongues.’ In his *Essay on Hallam’s Constitutional History*, Macaulay says that for Laud he ‘entertains a more unmitigated contempt than for any other character in our history. The fondness with which a portion of the church regards his memory can be compared only to that perversity of affection which sometimes leads a mother to select the monster or idiot of the family as the object of her especial favour.’ See also Macaulay’s *History* (i. 1.).

l. 17. **to waive** (also spelt **wave** or **veive**, Old Fr. *guesver*; possibly connected with Germ. *werfen*) is an old legal term, meaning to ‘abandon.’ *Choses guesvés* or *guavés* are in Law-Latin *bona waviata*, i.e. ‘goods waived, or thrown away by the thief in his flight’ (Blackstone’s *Com.* i. 8). The words *waifs* or *wefts* have the same meaning: ‘The lord of the soil has all wefts and strays here’ (*Ben Jonson*).

l. 18. **good Protestant**: ‘He was, like his father, a zealous Episcopalian. He was, moreover, what his father had never been, a zealous Arminian, and, though no Papist, liked a Papist much better than a Puritan’ (Macaulay, *Hist.* i. 1). Macaulay ignores here too much the merciless religious persecutions of James II.

I. 22. misrepresented : in the original edition is added, ‘and never more than in the present year.’ In 1824-5 great efforts were already being made by the Whigs on the behalf of Catholic Emancipation, and these efforts were met by the bitterest opposition. The Emancipation Bill was finally passed by the Duke of Wellington in 1829.

I. 23. certain class of men. Macaulay begins here a savage assault on his Tory opponents, the Dévs of Arimanes. The following is a definition of more modern date: ‘Every great change is brought about by the co-operation of two classes of men: these are those who are, on the whole, content with the principles by which they have hitherto guided their lives, though they think that some changes ought to be made in matters of detail; and those who start upon an entirely new principle, and who strive to realise an ideal society which commends itself to their own minds. They answer, in short, to the Whigs and Radicals of modern political life, whilst the Conservatives are represented by a third class averse to all change whatever.’ Neither Macaulay nor Mr. Gardiner would allow that Conservatism has ever even helped to bring about any beneficial change except under compulsion, or for contemptible motives. The ‘Catholic Emancipation Bill,’ by which Catholics were allowed office and seats in Parliament (for advocating which Pitt was forced to resign in 1802), was finally (1829) passed by a Parliament ‘from which,’ as Mr. Gardiner himself tells us, ‘the Whigs were rigorously excluded,’ and whose Prime Minister, the Tory Duke of Wellington, fought a duel ‘to prove his sincerity’ in introducing the Bill. At the time when Macaulay wrote this Essay, great efforts were being made by English Whigs to co-operate with the ‘Catholic Association,’ founded by Daniel O’Connell, which still virtually existed though nominally suppressed, and an Emancipation Bill passed the Commons (1825), but was rejected by the Lords. Macaulay took an active part in the agitation. See the account of the amusing stratagem by which he secured the votes of the Cambridge Senate (Trevelyan’s *Life*, p. 106). At this period of Macaulay’s life the army of Oromasdes was represented in English politics by the Whigs, and possibly also by the Liberal section of the Tories, under Canning; Arimanes was King George IV., whose Minister was Lord Liverpool, and the greater part of English ‘society’ composed the rank and file of the hosts of darkness.

I. 35. Their labour: Quoted from Satan’s speech to Beelzebub, *Par. Lost*, i. 164.

Page 31, l. 4. One sect: i.e. the Roman Catholics, especially in Ireland. William was, on the whole, tolerant (though the Massacre of Glencoe is a terrible stain on his memory), and the Irish Catholics were treated leniently after his defeat of James

at the battle of the Boyne (1690), which was followed by the subjugation of Ireland. ‘The Irish Parliament, however,’ says Gardiner, ‘representing now the colony of English alone, called for persecuting measures, and William had to govern Ireland, if he was to govern Ireland at all, in accordance with its wishes.’

1. 13. **Naples—Spain**: In 1820 the armies rose at Naples and in Spain against the tyrannical princes, Ferdinand I. and Ferdinand VII., and established democracies. Metternich, the Austrian Minister, called on the Powers to suppress what he considered might prove a pernicious example to other nations. Russia and Prussia naturally supported his views, and the Austrians crushed the Neapolitan revolution, and reinstated Ferdinand I. In 1823 the French entered Spain and restored Ferdinand VII. Both princes signalled their restoration by horrible atrocities.

**South America**: See note on Bolivar, p. 42, l. 25.

1. 18. **John Somers** (1652-1716) was advocate for the Seven Bishops, the principal framer of the Declaration of Rights (1689), a member, as Lord Keeper, of the ‘Whig Junto,’ and President of the Council under William III.; and when in Queen Anne’s reign the Act of Union (Scotland) was proposed, it was, as Green tells us, the wisdom and resolution of Lord Somers that brought the question to an issue (1707).

**Charles, Earl of Shrewsbury** took a leading part in inviting William of Orange to England, and was afterwards Secretary of State (1695). As Duke of Shrewsbury and Lord Treasurer he took part in the reception of George I.

1. 23. **the glorious**. . . The Whig toast: ‘To the glorious and immortal memory of King William.’

1. 27. **Ferdinand**: Ferdinand VII. of Spain. See on p. 31, l. 13.

**Frederic**: Friedrich Wilhelm III. (1797-1840), father of the German Emperor Wilhelm I. After the overthrow of Napoleon, Prussia, Russia, Austria, and (for a time) England formed what was called the ‘Holy Alliance,’ which was mainly directed by the political counsels of Prince Metternich, the Austrian minister. In 1822 Canning receded from this Alliance. Its professed object was to counteract anarchical tendencies, but it bolstered up absolutism and tyranny. See note on Naples and Spain, p. 31, l. 13.

1. 36. **Goldsmith** (1728-1771), author of the *Traveller*, the *Deserted Village*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, the *Vicar of Wakefield* etc. For life and works see any History of English Literature. The *Vicar of Wakefield* is now-a-days more read and admired in Germany than in England. Goldsmith and Dickens are looked upon by the ordinarily educated German as the two great writers of English prose. Besides the *English History* here

mentioned, Goldsmith wrote (to order) Histories of Greece and Rome. In his Essay on *Warren Hastings*, Macaulay, inveighing against Gleig's book on the same subject, wrote: 'More eminent men than Mr. Gleig have written nearly as ill as he, when they have stooped to similar drudgery. It would be unjust to estimate Goldsmith by the *Vicar of Wakefield*. . . .' His consternation knew no bounds when he discovered the blunder. 'I have not,' he confessed to the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, 'the consolation of being able to blame you or the printers; for it must have been a slip of my own pen. I have put the *Vicar of Wakefield* instead of the *History of Greece*; ' and he begged for a 'prominent correction' in the next number of the *Review*.

**Page 32, l. 2. proselyte:** lit. 'one who has arrived,' a 'stranger'; in the N.T. used of converts to Judaism (*Acts*, ii. 10).

1. 7. **not to popery . . .** This is a piece of rather disingenuous special pleading, and is virtually contradicted by what Macaulay himself relates in his History, and directly controverted by what he states in his Essay on Sir J. Mackintosh's *History of the Revolution*, where he devotes much space to proving 'by the strongest evidence' that James 'under the pretence of establishing perfect religious liberty, tried to establish the ascendancy and the exclusive dominion of the Church of Rome.' It is absurd to argue that James was ejected for his tyranny and not for his Catholicism; his tyranny consisted almost entirely in religious persecution. (See Gardiner's *History*, p. 639 sq., and Macaulay's *History*, chap. vi. *ad fin.*) The Bloody Assizes, with its three hundred and twenty victims, would alone prove this. These victims were 'regarded by themselves, and by a large proportion of their neighbours, not as wrong-doers, but as martyrs who sealed with their blood the truth of the Protestant religion' (Macaulay, *Hist.*, v.). And when that monster in human form, Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnel, was sent by James to Ireland to 'do the work which no Englishman would do,' in a short time 'almost every Privy Councillor, Judge, Sheriff, Mayor, Alderman, and Justice of the Peace was a Roman Catholic.' In London, 'the king and the Jesuitical cabal' worked at the extermination of the Protestants from all government offices. 'The cry was that a general proscription was at hand, and that every public functionary must make up his mind to lose his soul or to lose his place' (Macaulay, *Hist.*, vi.). Charles I. was a contemptible mixture of weakness and obstinacy: for him truth and honour and justice were, as Machiavelli taught, 'useful in the mouth, but not in heart'; he doubtless acted unconstitutionally, though possibly in accordance with the conviction that he was superior to law: but, even if the execution of Charles (over which Macaulay passes so lightly as a mere political error) did

not nullify Macaulay's parallel, it is most disingenuous to found the comparison merely on what Macaulay calls the 'naked constitutional question,' and to ignore the fact that the tyranny of Charles, however unconstitutional, was not what the tyranny of James was—the tyranny of a merciless inhuman bigot, or, to use Macaulay's own expression (*Hist.*, iv.), 'a deadly enemy to the religion and laws of England.' 'What roused pity above all,' says Green, 'were the cruelties wreaked on women. Mrs. Lisle was sent to the block for harbouring a rebel. Elizabeth Gaunt, for the same act of womanly charity, was burned at Tyburn. Pity turned into horror when it was found that cruelty such as this was avowed and sanctioned by the King. Even the cold heart of General Churchill, to whose energy the victory at Sedgemoor had mainly been owing, revolted at the ruthlessness of James. *This marble*, he cried, as he struck the mantlepiece on which he leant, *is not harder than the King's heart.*'

1. 11. **famous resolution** .... Macaulay purposely does not give the whole of what Gardiner calls this 'lumbering resolution.' It ran thus: 'That King James II., having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people, and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, had abdicated the government, and the throne had thereby become vacant.'

1. 31. **the Declaration of Right** (usually *Rights*), drawn up by Somers, and 'presented to William and Mary by the two Houses on Feb. 13th, 1689, in the banqueting-room at Whitehall. It recited the misgovernment of James, his abdication, and the resolve of the Lords and Commons to assert the ancient rights and liberties of English subjects. It denied the right of any king to exercise a dispensing power, or to exact money, or to maintain an army save by consent of Parliament' (Green). 'The main characteristic of the revolution was that it established the supremacy of Parliament by setting up a king and queen who owed their position to a Parliamentary vote' (Gardiner). The Declaration of Rights is the Great Charter of our present constitution, although, as Gardiner points out, it was nominally an agreement for a single generation. It was, indeed, afterwards found necessary to furnish the unwieldy vessel of Parliament with the helm of a 'Junto' or Cabinet; but the revolution of 1688 was, as Green says, the true origin of our present system of representative government under a limited monarchy.'

**Page 33, l. 10. prerogatives:** The Latin *prærogativus* denotes 'first asked.' The 'tribus prærogativa' was that tribe which obtained by lot the right of voting first in the public assembly. Hence the word came to mean 'privileged,' or (as a subst.) 'privilege.'

1. 12. **ship-money** .... ‘With the Scottish army in the background (1641), the Commons had obtained the royal assent to a bill authorising the election of a Parliament at least once in three years, even if the king did not summon one. In May the king agreed that the existing Parliament should not be dissolved without its own consent ... One after another the instruments by which the king had been enabled to defy the nation were snatched from his hands. Ship-money was declared to be illegal, and tonnage and poundage were no more to be levied without parliamentary consent’ (*Gardiner*).

1. 13. **Star Chamber**: Under William the Conqueror the Jews had no ordinary legal rights, but ‘a royal justiciary secured law to the Jewish merchant; his bonds were deposited for safety in a chamber of the royal palace at Westminster, which from their Hebrew name *starrs* gained the title of the Star Chamber.’ The ‘Court of Star Chamber’ was composed, during Elizabeth’s reign, of the Privy Council (whose jurisdiction had been much extended by Wolsey) and the two Chief Justices. ‘The possession of such a weapon,’ says Green, ‘would have been fatal to liberty under a great tyrant; under Charles it was turned simply to the profit of the Exchequer.’ The Court of High Commission was a kind of ecclesiastical Star Chamber. It was revived by James II.

1. 19. **to call a free parliament** .... James certainly on his accession made, as Macaulay tells us in his *History*, all kinds of promises ‘that he would defend the Church and would strictly respect the rights of the people’—promises which were received with great acclamation and enthusiasm; and when he learnt that William was preparing to land in England he ‘made concessions, abolished the Ecclesiastical Commission, gave back the charters of the City of London etc.’ (*Gardiner*); but that he actually offered to do what Macaulay here states seems doubtful.

1. 22. **twenty years** .... What period Macaulay means by ‘twenty years’ I cannot say. The complications with France lasted, intermittently, until at least the ‘general peace’ of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748). On the death of James II. (1701) Louis XIV. acknowledged his son (the Old Pretender) as king of England, and in 1744 the Young Pretender was ‘sent with a French fleet to invade England’ (*Gardiner*). As for intestine war, the Old Pretender joined the ‘Mars rising’ in Scotland (1715), and the march to Derby of Charles Edward and the battle of Culloden (1746) took place thirty years later. From the battle of the Boyne to the battle of Culloden was a period of 56 years. After Culloden Charles Edward escaped to France, where he is said to have lived a wretched drunken life until 1788. His brother Henry was created Cardinal of York, and died in 1807—the last legitimate descendant of James II. The present king of Italy

has Stuart blood in his veins, being descended from Henrietta, youngest daughter of Charles I. Some readers will doubtless remember the monument by Cauova in St. Peter's at Rome (visited in 1838 by Macaulay), on which are inscribed the names of James III., Charles Edward, and Henry. The inscriptions in the crypt, where they lie buried, give the Young Pretender and his brother the kingly title, as Charles III. and Henry IX.

l. 23. a national debt first took definite form under the administration of Montague, William's chancellor of the exchequer. See on p. 5, l. 27.

l. 25. The Long Parliament met first on November 3, 1640; after having been deprived of so many members that it was derisively called the 'Rump' or 'Trunk Parliament,' it was dissolved by Cromwell on April 20th, 1653. Its remnants were reinstated by the soldiers after the abdication of Richard Cromwell in 1659, but on March 16th, 1660, 'the Long Parliament came, by its own act, to its unhonoured end' (*Gardiner*).

**Page 34, l. 1.** the Petition of Right was drawn up by members of Charles' third Parliament (1628), among whom Sir John Eliot, Coke, and Selden were the most active. Its main requests were (1) the cessation of all arbitrary taxation, forced loans, 'benevolences,' and the like, (2) of all imprisonment, outlawry, or fine without 'lawful judgment of a man's peers,' (3) of martial law, and the billeting of soldiers in times of peace. Charles accepted these conditions, and his consent won for him a large subsidy from Parliament. This is what Macaulay alludes to in 'recent purchase.'

l. 17. le Roi le vent : the formula of royal assent to a Bill.

l. 31. no private virtues ? See on p. 32, l. 7.

l. 32. Oliver Cromwell : for his personal character, as well as his military and legislative genius, see especially Mr. Harrison's *Oliver Cromwell* (English Statesmen series). For other views of the subject consult Macaulay's *History*, chap. i.; Carlyle's *Cromwell's Life and Letters*, and on *Heroes*; Hallam's *Constitutional History* (reviewed by Macaulay); Gardiner's *Puritan Revolution*; Histories by Hume, Green, Gardiner etc.

**Page 35, l. 8.** of prelates : i.e. Laud.

l. 15. Vandyke : Anthony van Dyck, born at Antwerp 1599, died in England 1641. 'In 1632, doubtless through the intervention of the Earl of Arundel, he entered the service of Charles I. of England, who gave him a salary of £200 a year, and bestowed upon him the honour of knighthood. The nobility and gentry soon followed the king's example in adopting Van Dyck as their portrait-painter. ... He endeavoured to obtain a commission for the decoration of the walls of the Banqueting Hall, Whitehall, the ceiling of which was covered with Rubens' designs. Not

succeeding in this wish, he returned to Belgium in 1640, taking with him his wife, a lady of the noble Scotch house of Ruthven. Then, hearing that Louis XIII. proposed decorating the largest saloon of the Louvre, he hastened to Paris, but found that Poussin had already obtained the commission. Returning, doubtless in low spirits, to England, where the misfortunes then gathering over the king must have further depressed him, he was taken with an illness, which terminated in his death at the early age of 42' (*Crowe*). Of his many portraits of Charles one of the finest is in the Vienna Gallery: another (on horseback) is at Windsor, and another in the Louvre.

1. 26. regularity at chapel: In Macaulay's *Conversation between Cowley and Milton* the latter says of Charles: 'He was a man who had so much semblance of virtues as might make his vices most dangerous ... grave, demure, of a solemn carriage, and a sober diet; as constant at prayers as a priest, as heedless of oaths as an atheist.'

1. 31. example of his predecessors: 'Towards the end of the fifteenth century special circumstances occurred which made it necessary that the crown should be clothed for a time with extraordinary powers. ... The strong government of the Yorkists, succeeded by the far stronger government of the Tudors, was the answer to the national demand that the lawless nobility should be incapacitated from doing further mischief.... Before the depression of the nobility was effected, the struggle with Rome was begun. Fresh powers were needed by the crown, if it was to avert the risk of foreign invasion, to detect plots at home, and to maintain order. ... In almost every department of government the crown was thus enabled to arrogate to itself powers unknown in earlier times. In taxation ... means had been found by which the crown could evade the control of Parliament. People were asked sometimes to give money, sometimes to lend it, and sometimes the money thus lent was not repaid. ... The chief field in which the crown encroached upon the nation was in matters of judicature. The struggle against the nobles ... produced the Court of Star Chamber. The struggle against the papacy produced the Court of High Commission. . Elizabeth, with all her faults, sympathized with the people which she ruled. ... Would Elizabeth's successor be able to do the same? If not, the House of Commons was there to give voice to the national desires. . Such a change could hardly be effected without a contest' (*Gardiner's Puritan Revolution*).

Page 36, l. 16. Strafford: Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, whose impeachment, proposed by Pym, was the first act of the Long Parliament. He was executed on May 12th, 1641. 'A mob gathered round Whitehall and howled for the execution of the sentence. Charles, fearing lest the mob should take vengeance on the queen, weakly signed a commission appointing commis-

sioners to give the royal assent to the bill, though he had promised Strafford that not a hair of his head should be touched' (Gardiner's *Stuarts's History*).

1. 22. **Quakers**: George Fox 'had raised (1648) a tempest of derision. His doctrine a few years later rose greatly in public estimation. But at the time of the Restoration the Quakers were popularly regarded as the most despicable of fanatics. By the Puritans they were treated with severity here, and were persecuted to the death in New England. Nevertheless the public often confounded Puritan and Quaker' (Macaulay, *Hist.* i.). The Quakers were protected by Cromwell. After the Restoration 'more than four thousand were soon in prison, and the number rapidly increased. ... The Declaration of Indulgence, twelve years later, set free twelve thousand Quakers' (Green, ix. ii.). For George Fox see Morley's *Engl. Lit.*, p. 616. 'It was the Justice, Gervas Bennet, who first gave Fox and his friends the name of Quakers, because Fox bade him tremble and quake before the power of the Lord.' The performance described by Macaulay was possibly due to an over-literal interpretation of *Isaiah*, xx. 2.

1. 23. **Fifth-monarchy-men** 'declared that the time had arrived for the reign of the saints, and that they were themselves the saints' (Gardiner). The fifth monarchy was that of King Jesus; the others were the 'monarchies' of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

1. 30. **despotic sceptres**: In the original version of the essay stood 'the sceptres of Brandenburgh and Braganza' (Prussia and Portugal).

1. 33. **Devil of tyranny** .... Cf. 'When the Devil of tyranny hath gone into the body politic he departs not but with struggles, and foaming, and great convulsions. Shall he therefore vex it for ever, lest in going out he for a moment tear and rend it?' (Macaulay, *Conversation between Cowley and Milton*).

**Page 37, l. 8. the more violent the outrages ....** Macaulay's dicta in this and the following sentences might be used to explain, and almost justify, the massacre at Cawnpore. In the heat of argument Macaulay is too ready to palliate, as also to condemn. At times his feelings carry him so far that it makes a painful impression. His approval of, and his exultation at, the terrible vengeance of his countrymen after the Indian Mutiny must be regretted by all who admire and love his personal character. 'I may say,' he writes in 1857, 'that till this year I did not know what real vindictive hatred meant. With what horror I used to read in Livy how Fulvius put to death the whole Capuan Senate in the second Punic War! And with what equanimity I could hear that the whole garrison of Delhi ... had been treated in the same way! Is this wrong? Is not the

severity which springs from a great sensibility to human suffering a better thing than the levity which springs from indifference to human suffering ?'

l. 24. **Till men . . .** Macaulay probably alludes here also to the Slavery question, which before his birth was, as Trevelyan says, 'well before Parliament and the nation,' though the Abolition Bill was not passed till 1833. He seems to have taken no great interest in the matter, but his knowledge of the freed negro slave and his ways was doubtless above the average, as he must have heard quite enough, and more than enough, on the subject of his father's experiences in Sierra Leone, and his later efforts in support of the Abolition Bill. Literature will continue to regard Zachary Macaulay as the father of the 'great' Macaulay ; but it may be well in this case also to remember the fable of the man and the lion.

l. 29. **Xeres:** It is strange that in later editions Macaulay did not correct this blunder. Xeres, or Jarez de la Frontera, is a town on a plain some thirty miles N.E. of Cadiz, and the nearest river, the Guadalete, is some four miles distant. Our word 'Sherry' is nearer to the Arabic form of the name, 'Cheris.'

**Page 38, l. 9. sophisms,** a better word than 'sophistries' to denote captious quibbles or fallacies, such as were practised by the Greek sophists, the professed object of whose rhetoric was to 'make the weaker argument the stronger.'

l. 12. **Ariosto :** See on p. 27, l. 7. The 'fairy' is Manto, who describes herself as 'the Fate Manto who laid the first stone at the foundation of Mantua.' (Manto was a prophetess, daughter of the blind Theban prophet Teiresias, who himself was metamorphosed for a time into a woman because he had killed a female snake.) It is on the shore of the lake formed by the Mincio, near Mantua, that she meets Adonio. She reminds him how he had once saved a snake from being killed by a peasant. (Adonio favoured snakes, being himself, as Mantuan, descended from the Theban warriors who sprang from the teeth of the dragon slain by Cadmus.) She explains how, at certain seasons, she and her sisters, though immortal, are obliged to take the form of snakes, and how during this period they lose their power over the elements, and are exposed to great dangers. In return for his kindness, she promises him wealth and success in love. She changes herself into a little long-haired dog, 'white as ermine,' and accompanies him on a love adventure, which is by no means a 'pretty story' (*Orl. Fur.*, Canto 43, 78 sq.).

**Page 39, l. 17. Public Liberty.** On the subject of Milton's apparent mutability in political matters, Mr. Pattison says, 'Through all these stages Milton passed in the space of twenty years—Church-Puritan, Presbyterian, Royalist, Independent, Commonwealth's man, Oliverian. . . The names which we are

obliged to give to his successive political stages do not indicate shades of colour adopted from the prevailing political ground, but the genuine development of the public consciousness of Puritan England repeated in an individual. ... We may, perhaps, describe the motive force as a passionate attachment to personal liberty, liberty of thought and action.' Contrast the quotation from Dr. Johnson given on p. 28, l. 34.

l. 22. **that celebrated proceeding.** There is a touch of levity in the expression which would be perhaps excusable in a clever lad. In certain directions Macaulay's character never passed beyond the adolescent stage. 'He had no ear for the finer harmonies of the inner life. ... We find in him no trace of a spirit which has had experience of the solemn realities and truths of existence' (*Morison*).

l. 27. **Regicides:** probably he means merely those members of the so-called 'High Court of Justice' (including Cromwell) who actually voted for the king's execution; but possibly it includes the 'military saints' and other such 'eminent persons.'

l. 30. **essential distinction:** two very essential distinctions may be adduced. Firstly, Charles was executed, while James was purposely allowed to escape; moreover, cannon would not have been discharged against James unless he had joined a foreign army in invading the realms of a sovereign who had been duly elected by the consent of the vast majority of the nation. Secondly, the case of the Revolution is parallel to that of the Rebellion neither in respect of 'first principles' nor in respect of the 'naked constitutional question.' Whatever may be the various limits that theorists, such as Suarez, Hobbes, and Grotius may set to the duty of 'non-resistance,' it is an historical fact that the whole nation (including even his own daughters) rose against James II., and were actuated to the deed by the deepest horror and detestation of his inhumanity and tyranny. In the case of Charles I., Macaulay himself tells us, 'The military saints resolved that, in defiance of the old laws of the realm, and of the almost universal sentiment of the nation, the king should expiate his crimes with his blood' (*Hist.* I.). 'The majority of Englishmen,' says Gardiner, 'were ready to take Charles at his word. ... The Commons declared for a reconciliation with the king. ...' More than 140 members were excluded (by Colonel Purge and his soldiers), and the residue, about 50 or 60, appointed the illegal tribunal which called itself the High Court of Justice. Of the 135 members of this tribunal, only 67 appeared at the trial. Fairfax himself was absent. It was by these 'Regicides' that Charles was tried and condemned to death. 'If any political crime committed with good intentions deserves the extreme penalty of the law, Charles had deserved that penalty.' But he was neither tried nor condemned by the will of the nation.

**Page 40, l. 1. Jefferies**, usually Jeffreys. See Macaulay's *Hist.*, chap. ii., for a graphic description of the Bloody Assizes.

l. 3. **Boyne**: see on p. 31, l. 4.

l. 15. **heir ... nephew ... daughters**: James (the old Pretender); William of Orange (son of Mary, sister of James II.); Mary of Orange and Anne (afterwards Queen).

l. 18. **fifth of November**: the double anniversary of the detection of Gunpowder Plot (1605) and the landing of William III. (1688) at Brixham. The 'Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving,' as well as the Service to be used on the 'Day of Prayer and Fasting for the Martyrdom of the Blessed King Charles the First,' were removed from the Prayer-book by royal warrant in 1859.

l. 24. **We disapprove** .... In his *History* Macaulay, in expressing the same sentiment, uses, perhaps unwittingly, a rhetorical device known as *bathos*. 'In no long time it became manifest that those political and religious zealots, to whom this deed is to be ascribed, had committed not only a crime but an error.' On this 'error' he then expatiates. In his *Essay on Hallam's Const. History*, in which he goes still further into the question, he says: 'The opponents of Charles, it must be admitted, were technically guilty of treason'; and in commenting on the necessity for the king's execution he remarks, 'In fact the danger amounted to nothing. There was indeed danger from the attachment of a large party to his office; but this danger his execution only increased.' See also the *Conversation between Cowley and Milton*, where similar sentiments are expressed.

l. 34. **Presbyterians**: for their struggle with the Independents (the 'Separatists' or 'godly party') see Green's *History*, viii. 8, and Macaulay's *Hist.*, chap. i. In 1647 the Presbyterian Parliament passed a measure to disband the army—which refused to obey. After the death of Cromwell the whole body of the Presbyterians openly allied itself with the Royalists: it had to choose between the religious and military tyranny of the Independents or the restoration of the Stuarts, and it chose the latter.

**Page 41, l. 10. The very feeling** .... These truly Machiavellian sentiments cannot be taken seriously. Anything is grist for Macaulay's mill. That he was without any moral sense is disproved by his life—'good, upright, amiable man that he was,' as Mr. Morison justly says. But he seems to have been entirely without what Ruskin calls 'penetrative imagination'—without any insight into the realm of ideal morality. 'His mind never seems to have suggested to him problems of its own. ... He rarely discusses even polities, in which he took so large a share, with any serious heartiness. ... He does not betray the slightest interest in social or religious questions' (*Morison*). To wish a nation to

approve what was ‘not only a crime but an error,’ merely for the sake of securing ‘liberty,’ shows what Macaulay’s ideal of liberty must have been.

1. 18. *Salmasius*: Claude de Saumaise, professor at the University of Leyden, the most celebrated classical scholar of his day (see on p. 27, l. 35), was commissioned by Prince Charles, who had retired to the Hague, to write a manifesto against the Regicides. His *Defensio regia*, published at the end of the same year (1649), caused an alarm in Oliverian circles, and the council ordered its Latin secretary, Mr. Milton, to prepare something in answer to the book of Salmasius. The result was Milton’s *Pro populo Anglicano Defensio*. ‘Milton,’ says Mr. Pattison, ‘was as much above Salmasius in mental power as he was inferior to him in extent of book knowledge. ... His greater power was spent in a greater force of invective. ... When he should have been justifying his clients from the charge of rebellion and regicide before the bar of Europe, Milton is bending all his invention upon personalities. He exaggerates the foibles of Salmasius, his vanity, the vanity of Madame de Salmasius, her ascendancy over her husband. ... He exhausts the Latin vocabulary of abuse to pile up every epithet of contumely and execration on the head of his adversary. It but amounts to calling Salmasius fool and knave through a couple of hundred pages.’ This is what Macaulay calls the treatise of a ‘political philosopher.’ Salmasius at once wrote a reply, but this *Responsio* was not published till after the Restoration. In it he calls Milton (in Latin) a ‘puppy,’ a ‘blindling,’ a ‘coxcomb,’ an ‘unclean beast with nothing human except his guttering eyelids,’ and so on. Before this *Responsio* was ready the duel between Milton and Morus began; for which see Pattison’s *Milton*, p. 112 sq. Salmasius died at Spa in 1653, and ‘Milton delighted himself with the belief that he had shortened Salmasius’s life’ (*Dr. Johnson*).

1. 22. *Æneæ magni dextra*. In a battle against the Rutulians, Æneas wounds severely Mezentius, an exiled Etruscan king who had joined Turnus. Lausus, the son of Mezentius, hurls himself upon Æneas, and covers the retreat of his father. Æneas is unwilling to slay the lad, but being hard pressed is obliged to do so. Over his dead body he utters compassionate words, and adds, ‘In this, unhappy one, thou wilt find consolation for thy pitiable death—thou art fallen by the hand of great Æneas’ (*Æn.* 10. 830).

1. 32. *enemies of Milton*: for instance, Dr. Johnson, who says: ‘Milton, having now tasted the honey of public employment, would not return to hunger and philosophy, but continuing to exercise his office under a manifest usurpation betrayed to his (Cromwell’s) power that liberty which he had defended. Nothing can be more just than that rebellion should end in slavery ; that

he who had justified the murder of his king for some acts which to him seemed unlawful should now sell his services and his flatteries to a tyrant, of whom it was evident that he could do nothing lawful.' Milton accepted the post of Latin secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, on March 15th, 1649, just six weeks after the execution of Charles. 'On which same evening,' says Carlyle, 'one discerns in a faint but authentic manner certain dim gentlemen of the highest authority, young Sir Harry Vane to appearance one of them, repairing to the lodging of one Mr. Milton ... to put an official question to him there. ... I have authority to say that Mr. Milton, thus unexpectedly applied to, consents; is formally appointed on Thursday next ... and gives, and continues to give, great satisfaction to that Council, to me, and to the whole Nation now, and to all Nations' (vol. ii., *Letter 90*). Milton retained his office till the Restoration. The number of his Latin despatches, most of them very short, is 137, which gives an average of little more than one a month. Perhaps still more extraordinary than Milton's acceptance of office under a military usurper is the fact, which seems to be indubitably proved by Prof. Masson, that Milton, the author of the *Areopagitica*, held (in 1651) the post of censor or press licenser in connection with the weekly paper, *Mercurius Politicus*. In the *Areopagitica* he strongly denounces press censorships.

**Page 42, l. 3. despotic power.** 'The resistance of the army and of the old enemies of Charles's kingship had doubtless the very greatest weight in Oliver's determination to refuse the kingly title. ... Oliver owed his authority to his personal qualities. ... To call him a king was to make him ridiculous. ...' (Gardiner, *Pur. Rev.* 179). In 1657 Oliver's second Parliament proposed to revive the kingly office, and offered him the title of king. This he declined, and was installed more solemnly than before as Protector. The comedy of the 'gran rifiuto' can be read in Carlyle's *Cromwell* (vol. 5, p. 238 sq.), and should be compared with the description of a similar comedy in *Julius Cæsar* (Act 1, Sc. 2).

**l. 5. dissolved it.** The Long Parliament was dissolved by force, April 20th, 1653, Oliver's first Parliament was summoned Sept. 3rd, 1654, dissolved Jan. 22nd, 1655; his second was summoned on Sept. 17th, 1656; and dissolved Jan. 20th, 1658. [A new Parliament met during Richard Cromwell's brief Protectorate, but after three months was dissolved by the army. The remnant of the old Long Parliament then met, was dispersed by the soldiery, met again, and on March 16th, 1660, 'came by its own act to its unhonoured end.']}

**l. 9. Venetian oligarchy.** Even under the Byzantine Empire, Venice, though tributary, had its Doges (Doge = duca, Lat. *dux*). The first was Paulucus. In the eleventh century it became

independent, and about 1172 its government was entrusted to two Councils, the *Consiglio maggiore* and the *Consiglio minore* or *Signoria*, the latter consisting of the Doge and six Councillors. To these were added later the 'Forty' (*Quarantia*) with judicial powers, and a Senate for foreign affairs (1230). But the aristocratic party gradually became supreme, and introduced the 'Serrata,' i.e. the exclusion of all from the Great Council except the members of certain noble families, whose names were entered in the Golden Book. In order to detect and suppress conspiracies the celebrated council of the 'Ten' was instituted, which introduced the Inquisition. It was through this agency that the Doge Marino Faliero was executed (1355). Supreme judicial power was afterwards wielded by the 'Three.' The power of Venice was at its height between 1400 and 1500, after the destruction of the Genoese fleet. In the long struggle with the Turks they gradually lost all their foreign possessions. Cyprus was conquered by the Turks in 1570, and Crete in 1669.

1. 11. **a constitution.** 'On Dec. 16th, 1653, a constitutional document, known as the *Instrument of Government*, was drawn up by Cromwell's leading supporters, and accepted by him.' For the character and contents of this *Instrument*, see Gardiner's *Student's Hist.*, p. 568, and Green, viii. x., 'The new Constitution.' In his *Essay* on Hallam's *Constitutional History*, Macaulay combats Hallam's assertion that 'Cromwell never showed any signs of a legislative mind.'

1. 15. **Lord Clarendon:** see on p. 29, l. 16.

1. 17. **Dutch stadholder:** the Dutch word *Stadhouder* means the 'holder or governor of a town.' In German it is written *Statthalter*, and means a 'stead-holder,' i.e. a 'vice-regent' ('einer der die Stelle des Landesherrn vertritt'). It is therefore inaccurate to write 'stadholder,' for in Dutch a town is *stad*, not *stadt*, and, in German, *Stadt* means a town, not 'place' or 'stead.' *Stadt* and *Statt* are merely different forms of the same word, but are used in different senses.

1. 25. **Bolivar,** the 'Liberator of South America,' was 'born at Caracas in 1783. In 1825 he had already freed much of the continent from the Spanish yoke, and, at the date of Macaulay's *Essay*, he was dictator of North Peru (called after him Bolivia). In 1828 he was president of Columbia. Having developed despotic tendencies, and having been detected in intrigues with France and England, he was compelled to resign (1830), and soon afterwards died.'

**Page 43, l. 18. upheld abroad.** 'In his view of European polities Cromwell was misled by the conservative and unspeculative temper of his mind as well as by the strength of his religious enthusiasm. ... What Sweden had been under Gustavus, England, Cromwell dreamt, might be now - the head of a great

Protestant league against Catholic aggression. ... Cromwell was resolute to kindle again the religious strife (the Thirty Years' War) which had been closed by the treat of Westphalia, and he seized on a quarrel (!) between the Duke of Savoy and his Protestant subjects (the Vandois) as a means of kindling it. ... As though to announce the outbreak of a world-wide struggle, Blake bombarded Algiers, and destroyed the fleet with which its pirates had ventured, through the reign of Charles, to insult the English coast. The thunder of his guns, every Puritan believed, would be heard in the Castle of St. Angelo, and Rome itself would have to bow to the greatness of Cromwell. But the vast schemes of the Protector broke down everywhere' (Green, viii. x.). Besides the conquest of Jamaica and the capture of the Spanish treasure-ships at Santa Cruz there was little or nothing gained by a vast expenditure of blood and money. Nor was the success on land of much account. 'A detachment of the Puritan army joined the French troops who were attacking Flanders under the command of Turenne. ... The victory of the Danes forced the Flemish towns to open their gates to the French, and gave Dunkirk to Cromwell.' It seems therefore somewhat of an exaggeration to assert, as Green does, that 'never had the fame of England stood higher.'

1. 22. **Instrument of Government**: see on p. 42, l. 11.

1. 23. **the Humble Petition and Advice** was the name of the address presented to Cromwell in 1657 by his second Parliament. Besides the offer of kingship it contained various suggestions for 'amendments to the Constitution'; among which was a proposal for the formation of a Second House. Cromwell accepted everything except the offer of the kingly title. See on p. 42, l. 3.

**Page 44, l. 2. Independents**: For their 'rise and character' see Macaulay's *Hist.*, chap. i., and Green, viii. i.; and Gardiner's *Puritan Revolution* (p. 82) for an account of the earlier Independents (Separatists, Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers etc.). 'Only the Independents and a few despised sects, such as the Quakers, upheld the right of every man to worship God according to the bidding of his own conscience. The great bulk of the Puritan party, with the Presbyterians at its head, were at one with their opponents in desiring an uniformity of worship, if not of belief, throughout the whole land' (Green).

1. 6. **of tyrants**: The character of Charles II. did not openly discover itself at first, so that Macaulay's assertion is not quite fair. For the first few years of his reign he 'coolly watched, with consummate secrecy, the shame and discontent of his people with the one aim of turning it to his own advantage.' But the epithets 'frivolous and heartless' were undoubtedly richly earned by Charles. 'What his subjects saw in their king was a pleasant, brown-faced gentleman playing with his spaniels, or

drawing caricatures of his ministers, or flinging cakes to the waterfowl in his park. ... His manners were perfect, and there was a careless freedom and courtesy in his address which won over everybody. ... His natural intelligence showed itself in his pursuit of chemistry and anatomy, and in the interest he showed in the scientific inquiries of the Royal Society. ... Even Rochester in his merciless epigram was forced to own that Charles 'never said a foolish thing.' ... He hated business. He gave no sign of ambition. The one thing he seemed in earnest about was sensual pleasure'—(as Milton says of Belial: 'to vice industrious')—... 'Gambling and drinking helped to fill up his vacant moments. ... No thought of remorse or of shame seems ever to have crossed his mind. ... Virtue he regarded simply as a trick by which clever hypocrites imposed on fools. ... Gratitude he had none. ... He was incapable of either love or hate. The only feeling he retained for his fellow-man was that of an amused contempt' (Green).

1. 12. his rival : Louis XIV. 'The young king, Lewis XIV., avowed himself the champion of Catholicism and despotism. ... France was the wealthiest of European powers and her subsidies could free Charles from his dependence on his Parliament. ... The aid of Lewis could alone realise the aims of Charles, and Charles was freed by nature from any shame.' ... Again and again Charles made secret treaties with Louis and accepted his subsidies. His marriage with Catherine of Portugal was due to his wish to conciliate Louis. 'He offered to declare his religion and to join France in an attack on Holland (1670) if Lewis would grant him a subsidy equal to a million a year. On this basis a secret treaty was negotiated.' 'At one stage (1678) he demanded from Lewis a fresh pension for three years as the price of his good offices.' ... 'A force of 3000 English soldiers were landed at Ostend ... but Charles soon agreed for a fresh pension to recall the brigade. ... All faith in England was lost' (Green).

1. 19. *Anathēma Maranātha*: see 1 Cor. xvi. 22. From the verb *ἀνατίθημι*, 'I dedicate,' two nouns were formed, viz. *ἀνάθεμα* and *ἀνάθημα* (*anathēma* and *anathēma*), of which the former came in later Greek to mean a thing devoted to destruction, an 'accursed thing.' It is this word that St. Paul uses when he says (*Rom.* ix. 3), 'I could wish that I myself were anathema.' *Anathēma* means simply a 'votive offering.' See Trench's *New Test. Synonyms*. *Maranātha* is Hebrew, and means 'The Lord is come'; it is used as a form of asseveration, like *Amen*, which is also Hebrew. For the state of morals and literature during the reign of Charles II., see Macaulay's *History*, chap. ii.

1. 21. *Belial and Moloch*: Charles II. and James II.

He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptered king,  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit  
That fought in heaven, now fiercer by despair;

. . . Of God, or hell, or worse,  
He recked not.

. . . On the other side up rose  
Belial, in act more graceful and humane ;  
A fairer person lost not heaven ; he seemed  
For dignity composed, and high exploit ;  
But all was false and hollow, though his tongue  
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear  
The better reason, to perplex and dash  
Maturest counsels ; for his thoughts were low,  
To vice industrious. . .

*Par. Lost*, 43 sq. and 108 sq.

For Moloch worship and human sacrifice, I may perhaps refer to my Introduction to Goethe's *Iphigenie* (Macmillan). To enter fully into the ghastly details is impossible in a note.

Page 45, l. 8. **kissed the hand** : at the first meeting of the Long Parliament, Nov. 5th, 1640.

l. 11. **dug up** : at the Restoration 'the bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were torn from their graves and hung on gibbets at Tyburn, while those of Pym and Blake were cast out of Westminster Abbey into St. Margaret's Churchyard' (*Green*).

**calves' heads**. In the original edition this sentence runs : 'who dined on calves' heads or on broiled rumps, and cut down oak trees or stuck them up ...'. Calves' heads were eaten by the Cromwellian party as an outward and visible sign of their delight at the decapitation of the King. When General Monk entered London and declared for a free Parliament in place of the 'Rump' remnant of the Long Parliament, 'that night every street was ablaze with bonfires. That there might be no mistake about the meaning of the display, rumps were roasted over the fires, and carried about the streets in derision' (*Gardiner*). Oak branches were used by Royalists as mementos of the escape of Prince Charles after his father's execution. 'Charles threw himself upon the loyalty of a Royalist gentleman in the neighbourhood, and he was not deceived. In after days men told how he had been seated in the branches of an oak whilst the troopers who were searching for him rode below. Dressed as a servant he rode to Bristol, with a lady riding on a pillion behind. At Charmouth he hoped to find a vessel to carry him to France. But the master of the ship refused to go. It was not till he reached Brighton, then a small fishing village, that he found the help he wanted, and made his escape from England' (*Gardiner, Pur. Rev.* 159).

l. 30. **satirists and dramatists** : such as Samuel Butler (author of *Hudibras*), Dryden, and Wycherley, and a legion of court verse-makers, who outdid each other in scurrility and indecency.

'The war between wit and Puritanism soon became a war between wit and morality. The hostility excited by a grotesque caricature of virtue did not spare virtue itself. ... Nothing could be so pure or so heroic but that it became foul and ignoble by transfusion through those foul and ignoble minds. ... The vigorous and fertile genius of Butler, if it did not altogether escape the prevailing infection, took the disease in a mild form. ... The wits had been impelled by their old hatred of Puritanism to take the side of the court, and had been found useful allies. Dryden in particular had done good service' ... (*Macaulay, Hist.*, chap. iii.).

**Page 46, l. 3. excellent writers**: probably Scott is especially meant. *Peveril of the Peak* was published in 1823. *Woodstock*, which, as several other of his novels, displays strong anti-Puritan feeling, was not published till 1826.

**1. 5. Ecco il fonte . . .** In his *Gerusalemme Liberata* Tasso relates how the Christian warrior Rinaldo had disappeared. A hermit Sage reveals to two of Rinaldo's fellow-warriors how he is held captive by the witch Armida in an enchanted island, and warns them of the dangers that they will have to encounter in their search. Among other dangers is the *River of Laughter*, 'a little draught from whose lucent waves quickly inebriates the soul, and makes it joyous; then it moves him to laugh, and so much does this laughter at last increase that he is killed by it.' When they arrive at the river they are tempted by sirens, who try in vain to allure them into the waves. The lines quoted are from Canto xv. 57. 'Lo, the fount of laughter, and, lo, the stream which contains in itself deadly perils. Now it behoves us to hold in curb our desire, and to be very cautious.' [*Hor* and *hora* are the old and more correct forms of *or* and *ora*, 'now' or 'hour.']

**1. 15. terrible to every nation**: this is again a dab of very crude colour. See on p. 48, l. 18.

**1. 25. specious caskets**: *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 7 and 9, iii. 2.

**1. 34. to enjoy him**: the Westminster Catechism defiles the 'chief end of man' to be 'To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever.'

**Page 47, l. 32. empires had risen**: cf. on p. 36, l. 23.

**Page 48, l. 13. the Beatific Vision . . .** See on p. 17, l. 4.

**1. 14. Vane**. Sir Harry Vane, the younger, son of the Secretary of State of the same name, was born in 1612. He was a Puritan and republican. In 1636 he joined the Puritans in America, and was for a year Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. On his return he took a prominent part in the Civil War. In 1643 he was the principal negotiator of the 'Solemn League and Covenant.' In Parliament he took the lead of the Republican

party of the Independents, and opposed those who were for allowing Cromwell despotic powers. At the ejection of the Rump Parliament (1653), he condemned Cromwell's conduct as 'against all right and all honour.' 'Ah, Sir Harry Vane,' replied Cromwell, 'you might have prevented all this, but you are a juggler, and have no common honesty. The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane.' He also headed the Republicans against Richard Cromwell. Charles II. had promised him his life, but connived in his execution (1661). 'He is too dangerous a man to let live,' Charles wrote, 'if we can safely put him out of the way.' Milton probably owed his Secretaryship to the patronage of Vane. One of his sonnets is addressed to him.

**l. 16. Fleetwood:** a 'military saint' who married Cromwell's daughter. After Oliver's death the army demanded from Richard Cromwell that Fleetwood should be their commander and be independent of the Protector. Richard nominated Fleetwood, but insisted upon his acting under orders as Lieutenant General.

**l. 35. Stoics.** See on p. 21, l. 11.

**Page 49, l. 4. Talus.** In Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (Bk. v., canto i.), it is related how a fair lady Irena appeals to the Faerie Queene for help, and how Sir Artegal is chosen for the task. Now Sir Artegal had been brought up from childhood by Astraea, that 'star-bright' daughter of Zeus, who, according to old mythology, dwelt on earth during the golden age, and was afterwards placed among the constellations as the 'Virgin.' From Astraea Sir Artegal received the sword 'Chrysaor,' which once Zeus himself had wielded against Titans, and 'when she parted hence, she left her groome, an yron man' to serve the Knight.

His name was Talus, made of yron mould,  
Immoveable, resistlesse without end ;  
Who in his hand an yron flale did hould,  
With which he thresht out falsehood, and did truth unfold.

This 'yron page' accompanies Sir Artegal on his adventure, and seizes his enemies in his 'yron paw,' or smites them with his flail.

Talus was, in Greek mythology, a monster of brass in human form, which was made by Hephaestus, the god of fire, and given to Minos, king of Crete. Thrice daily he made a circuit of the island, and whenever he saw strangers landing on the coast he made himself red-hot and seized them in his fiery embrace. The myth is evidently a reminiscence of Moloch worship—as also is the Minotaur.

**l. 17. anchorites:** the late Greek word ἀναχωρήτης (anachoretes) means 'one who retires,' i.e. from the world, an 'anchorite.' *Hermit*, or *eremite*, is the late Greek word ἐρημῆτης, a 'dweller in the desert.'

**Dunstan** : Abbot of Glastonbury, Bishop of London and Winchester, and Archbishop of Canterbury. His political activity began in the reign of Eadmund (943), and he died in 988, having seen five different kings on the throne. For his administration, see Green's *History*, i. vi.

1. 18. **De Montforts.** Macaulay probably does not allude to the celebrated Simon de Montfort, the brother-in-law and opponent of Henry III., who fell at the battle of Evesham in 1265, but to his father. 'Strangely enough,' says Gardiner, 'Simon de Montfort, the man who was to be the chief opponent of Henry and his foreign favourites, was himself a foreigner. He was sprung from a family established in Normandy, and his father, the elder Simon de Montfort, had been the leader of a body of Crusaders from the north of France, who had passed over the south to crush a vast body of heretics known by the name of Albigeois (Albigenses), from Albi, a town in which they swarmed.'

**Dominic**, founder of the Preaching Friars (for whom see Green's *History*, iii. 6), and arch-persecutor of heretics, was born at Calahorra in Old Castile in 1170, and died at Bologna in 1221. He was of the noble family of the Guzmans. 'He was devout, abstemious, charitable ; sold his clothes to feed the poor, and even offered to sell himself to the Moors to ransom the brother of a poor woman. ... In his twenty-fifth year he became a Canon ... and accompanied his Bishop on a mission to Denmark. ... On his return he stopped at Languedoc to help to root out the Albigensian heresy. ... What part he took in this is a contested point —enough, it would seem, to obtain for him from the Inquisition of Toulouse the title of Persecutor of Heretics. In 1215 he founded the Order of Preaching Friars and was made Master of the Sacred Palace at Rome. In 1219 the centre of the Order was established at Bologna, and there he died and was buried in the Church of St. Nicholas. ... It has been generally supposed that Dominic founded the Inquisition. It would appear, however, that the special guardianship of that institution was not intrusted to the Dominicans till the year 1233' (Longfellow, *Notes to the Commedia*).

**Escobar del Corro** was a Spanish Jesuit and a member of the Inquisition. He held a professorship at Seville (about 1642), and was the author of various theological works, mostly of a polemical nature, and in favour of the Inquisition.

1. 28. **careless Gallios** . . . There were doubtless some of the republicans to whom not only Puritanism was abhorrent, but all religion was indifferent. Others, however, there were, who, although 'passionate worshippers of freedom,' could not sacrifice their religious convictions and their love of gentleness and refinement to political ends. Such was Lord Falkland, who at the

beginning of the Civil War was Secretary of State and leader in Parliament of the moderate republican party—a scholar and an enthusiast for religious toleration, ‘gathering round him at Great Tew a group of theological Latitudinarians’ (*Green*). He was, as Matthew Arnold (*Essay on Lord Falkland*) tells us, a ‘hater of root and branch work,’ and the ‘martyr of sweetness and light.’ In disgust at the Puritans, he joined Charles at York, and fell in the first battle of Newbury, ‘for a cause that was not his own,’ as Green says, but at all events, fighting against what he had learnt to regard as a wrong cause. And whatever we may think of the ‘naked constitutional question,’ it is for many impossible not to sympathize with such men as Lord Falkland, who had to choose between Charles and the Puritans, although we may not go quite so far as Matthew Arnold, who says: ‘So grossly imperfect, so false was the Puritan conception and presentation of righteousness, so at war with the ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good nature and good humour of the English people, that it led straight to moral anarchy, the profligacy of the Restoration.’ Others, such as Vane, Overton and Bradshaw, also opposed Cromwell’s absolutism, and (as Mr. Pattison expresses it) proved ‘useless at the most critical juncture,’ but Vane, at anyrate, was no ‘Gallio with regard to religious subjects.’ On Lord Falkland there is a charming paper among the *Essays and Addresses* of the late Earl of Carnarvon.

1. 32. **Plutarch** was born in Bœotia, probably about 45 A.D. But little is known of his life. He gave Greek lectures on philosophy at Rome during the reign of Domitian, but seems to have spent the latter part of his life at his native town, Chæronea. He wrote over 60 works. Of these his *Parallel Lives* is the only one which is generally known. In this book he gives the lives of 46 famous Greeks and Romans, arranged in pairs for the sake of comparison. In 1579, when Shakespeare was a lad of fifteen, Plutarch’s *Lives* were done into English (from Amgot’s French translation) by Sir Thomas North. This was the version with which Shakespeare was familiar.

1. 34. **Brissotines.** Jean Pierre Brissot, born 1754, founded a revolutionary society called the Société des Amis Noirs. As its representative he was sent to North America, but in 1789, at the news of the Revolution, he hurried back to Paris, where he founded the journal *Le Patriote Français*. His influence became so great that revolutionaries were commonly designated ‘Brissotins’ (as also ‘Girondins’). The declaration of war against England and Holland in 1793 was mainly his work. He was, like Lord Falkland, an enthusiast for republican liberty, and opposed the bloodthirsty inhumanities of Robespierre. This led to his ruin. He was guillotined together with 20 of his adherents.

**Page 50, l. 8. Whitefriars.** In the 13th century a House of Carmelite Friars had been established in Whitefriars. Before the Reformation the precinct of this House had been a privileged Sanctuary for criminals, and at the time of Charles I. was still allowed to offer protection to debtors. ‘Insolvents consequently were to be found in every dwelling, from cellar to garret. Of these a large proportion were knaves and libertines. ... The civil power was unable to keep order in a district swarming with such inhabitants ; and thus Whitefriars became the favourite resort of all who wished to be emancipated from the restraints of the law. ... Amidst a rabble so desperate, no peace-officer’s life was in safety. At the cry *Rescue*, bullies with swords and cudgels, and termagant hags with spits and broomsticks, poured forth by the hundred. ... Even the warrant of the Chief Justice of England could not be executed without the help of a company of musketeers’ (Macaulay, *History*, chap. iii.).

**l. 18. Janissaries** (Germ. *Janitscharen*) are the Turkish *jeni cheri*, or ‘new troops,’ which were enrolled first by Sultan Urchan in 1330. They were recruited mainly from prisoners and from the sons of Christians, who were taken from their parents when young children and placed with Turkish peasants, by whom they were inured to hardship, and accustomed to bloodshed and cruelty. The Janissaries were famed for the fury of their onset in battle, which, according to the precept of the Koran, they repeated thrice. High pay enticed Turkish free-men and Christians to enter the ranks of the Janissaries, whose numbers rose to 100,000. Early in the present century they caused much trouble by their jealousy towards the more modern part of the army, and at the time when the Essay was written things had reached such a state that, in the next year (1826), the whole corps was disbanded. More than 10,000 are said to have been massacred or otherwise put to death, and 30,000 were banished.

**I. 30. Duessa.** In the *Faerie Queene* (i. 2) it is related how the Redcrosse Knight, by the guiles of the wizard Archimago, parted from Una (Truth), meets a ‘faithlesse Sarazin,’ accompanied by ‘a goodly lady, clad in scarlot red, Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay, And like a Persian mitre on her head she wore.’ This woman is Duessa (Falsehood), who had assumed the name of Fidessa (Faith, i.e. the Roman Church). The Knight slays the Saracen Sansfoy, and takes the pseudo-Fidessa under his protection. Oppressed with the heat, they take shelter under a tree, and the Knight wishes to make a garland for his companion. When he plucks off a bough, ‘smal drops of gory blood’ came trickling forth, and a ‘piteous yelling voice was heard.’ (This is copied from Virgil or Dante.) The voice is that of Fradubio (‘Amidst doubt’), who had been changed

into a tree by the witch Duessa. How Duessa afterwards misleads the Knight, and practises her 'potent spells,' Spenser recounts. The allegory has also a political sense, Duessa signifying Mary Stuart. See Morley's *Engl. Lit.* 446 sq.

**Page 51, l. 6. Round Table.** Hallam is strongly of opinion that the legend of Arthur is of British (Welsh or Danish) origin, and was not imported from Bretagne. The earliest romance in which Arthur is mentioned seems to have been by Havelok, a Danish settler in England, to whom probably Geoffrey of Monmouth, about 1120, was indebted for his knowledge of the legend. One of the most celebrated later versions was '*La Morte d'Arthur*,' by Malory. Tennyson's *Idylls* were published 1857-73.

**l. 13. not a Puritan . . .** Mr. Pattison says (see on p. 39, l. 17) that the stages through which Milton passed were the 'genuine development of the consciousness of Puritan England, repeated in an individual.' He thought and acted independently . . . 'He moved forward, not because Cromwell and the rest advanced, but with Cromwell and the rest . . . He saw the unavoidable necessity which forced Cromwell, at this moment, to undertake to govern without a representative assembly.' What Milton thought on the subject of the Kingship seems not clear, although in his *Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Republic* (1600) he declaims against kings, and, as Mr. Stopford Brooke says, he was 'ominously silent' during the last years of the Protectorate. He had already sacrificed so much of what Mr. Pattison calls 'doctrinaire republicanism,' and what others might call his fundamental principles, that, while approving of Cromwell's refusal of the kingly title, he probably was in no wise shocked by the Humble Petition. Milton dissented strongly from Cromwell on the dependence of the Church on the State, and asserted in his Treatise of 1659 that 'it is not lawful for any Power on earth to compel in matters of Religion.'

**not a free-thinker,** i.e. as Lord Falkland seems to have been, in Macaulay's opinion. See on p. 49, l. 28.

**l. 14. not a Royalist:** 'When he wrote his *Reason of Church Government* (1641) he was still a Royalist . . . still retaining the belief of his age that monarchy in the abstract had somewhat of divine sanction' (Pattison).

**l. 19. the Christmas revel** was abhorred by the Independents as the Saturnalia of superstition and sensuality. On the recommendation of the Westminster Divines, Parliament ordained Christmas day to be kept as a Fast Day (1644)

**l. 24. As ever . . .** From the Sonnet entitled *On his being arrived to the age of twenty-three.*

l. 31. **jargon** (Fr. *jargon*, Ital. *gergone*) is used by Chaucer of the chanting or warbling of birds :

Layes of loue, full well souning  
Their songen in their iargoning,

but also of the chatter of a magpie :

And ful of jeron as a flecked pie.

It may be connected with Germ. *girren*, 'to coo,' or with Engl. 'to jar.' A queer derivation has been proposed, viz., from Ital. *cherico*, 'clerical,' the Latin used by the priests being 'jargon' to the uneducated.

**Page 52, l. 7. hero of Homer:** When Odysseus (Ulysses) in his wanderings came to the island of the Sirens (which, according to Homer, was off the S.W. coast of Sicily), he stuifid the ears of his companions with wax and lashed himself to the mast. He thus heard unharmed the song of the Sirens, that no mortal could resist. The Roman poets place the Sirens on the coast of Campania.

l. 11. **Circe** was the daughter of the Sun (Helios) and the Ocean-nymph Perse. She lived in the island of Aeaea. Those who tasted of her magic cup were transformed into beasts. Ulysses, by a counter-charm, a herb called *moly*, given him by Hermes, was preserved from her witcheries; but some of his men were changed into pigs. These he released, and staid a year with Circe.

l. 17. **Prelacy:** Of Milton's twenty-five political pamphlets nine are on the subject of Church Government or other ecclesiastical matters. One of these, *On Prelatical Episcopacy*, was directed against a publication by Archbishop Usher, and others (including the *Smeectymnuus* for the meaning of which word see on p. 55, l. 13) against Bishop Hall. In all of these he mocks at Episcopacy as opposed to 'the reason and end of the Gospel.' These pamphlets appeared in 1641-2.

l. 18. **the Penseroso** was certainly written (probably in 1633) some seven or eight years before the anti-prelacy pamphlets. The visit to Italy (1638-9) seems to have contributed to the development of Milton's Puritanical tendencies. The lines to which Macaulay refers are :

. . . the high-embowed roof,  
With antique pillars massy proof,  
And storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light;  
There let the pealing organ blow  
To the full-voiced quire below  
In service high and anthems clear,  
As may with sweetness through my ear  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

Page 53, l. 1. **Ship money and the Star chamber**: see on p. 33, ll. 12, 13.

l. 4. **Liberty of the press**: advocated by Milton in his *Aeropagitica* (1644), a treatise in the form of a Speech addressed to the Parliament. The title is taken from the *Arcopagitica Discourse* of Isocrates, an unspoken oration addressed (about 400 B.C.) to the 'Ariopagis,' one of the two great Councils of Athens (so called because it met on the 'Hill of Mars'). For the fact that Milton himself held the office of press-censor, see on p. 41, l. 32. 'The press,' says Maenulay (Hallam's *Const. Hist.*), 'was emancipated from the censorship soon after the Revolution, and the government immediately fell under the censorship of the press.' Complete liberty of the press was not secured till some 70 years later. 'The prosecution of the *North Briton*, a journal written by Wilkes, first established (in 1764) the right of the press to discuss public affairs.' Wilkes was, however, prosecuted for libel and sedition, and fled to France, and was expelled from Parliament. Grenville then issued 200 injunctions against different journals, which raised a storm of indignation, and he was forced to recede. In 1770 the 'failure of a prosecution directed against a Letter of 'Junius,' which was addressed to the king, established the right of the press to criticise the conduct, not only of ministers or Parliament only, but of the sovereign himself' (Green).

l. 13. **malignants**, the term 'malignants' was commonly applied to the Royalists.

l. 14. **His own poem**: *Comus*. Comus is the sorceror. At the waving of his wand the Lady had been 'chained up in alabaster,' and thus made physically incapable of resisting him, though she repels his advances with words of scorn. The Brothers then 'rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The Attendant Spirit comes in,' and speaks the lines here quoted (815-19).

l. 32. **secular chain**. In a sonnet addressed to Cromwell, after extolling that 'chief of men who, on the neck of crowned fortune proud, had reared God's trophies,' Milton adds that 'much remains to conquer still,' for

now foes arise,  
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.

Help us to save free conscience from the paw  
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw.

For Milton's opposition to Cromwell on the subject of a National Church, see p. 51, l. 13; and for his hatred of Prelacy, see on p. 52, l. 17. *Secularis* in classical Latin means 'centennial,' but in ecclesiastical writers signifies 'temporal,' i.e. non-ecclesiastical.

l. 34. **sublime treatise**: the *Areopagitica*. See on p. 53, l. 4.

l. 35. **sign upon his hand**.... From *Deut.* vi. 8: ‘And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.’ Cf. *Ex.* xiii. 16, *Deut.* xi. 18, *Prov.* iii. 3 etc. A ‘frontlet’ is a forehead-band on which some text of the Law is inscribed.

**Page 54, l. 11. the bishops**: see on p. 52, l. 17.

l. 24. **paradoxical**: see on p. 4, l. 25.

l. 25. **regicide**, as *patricide*, *matricide*, *tyrannicide* etc., are used both for the agent and the act; e.g. matricide is equivalent to Lat. *matricida*, or *matricidium*. For Milton’s pamphlets on Divorce, see on p. 3, l. 8, and Pattison’s *Milton*, pp. 56 sq. He stood up for regicide in his controversy with Salmasius (see on p. 41, l. 18), and in the *Eikonoklastes* (the ‘Image-breaker’), written in answer to the *Eikon Basilike* (Royal Image, i.e. Portrait of the King), probably composed by a Dr. Gauden, but professedly a copy of papers written by Charles shortly before his execution. In the original version of the Essay the words ‘he ridiculed the Eikon’ stand after ‘regicide.’ Macaulay probably felt that the words might lower Milton in the reader’s estimation, but they underestimate the truth. Mr. Pattison justly says that the *Eikonoklastes* is in ‘a tone of rude railing and insolent swagger, which would have been always unbecoming, but which at this moment was grossly indecent.’

l. 26. **education**: Milton, having undertaken the tuition of his nephews (see on p. 26, l. 33), became interested in the theory of education. He had made the acquaintance of a German, Samuel Hartlib, who was endeavouring to propagate in London the theories of Commenius, a German educational reformer. These theories, as far as they relate to language, have been revived in late years, and the method which they advocate is frequently lauded as a new and important discovery—a royal road to the acquisition of not only modern but also ancient languages. It may, therefore, be instructive to hear what Hallam says on the subject of Commenius. ‘This author, a man of much industry, some ingenuity, and little judgment, made himself a temporary reputation by his *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (a kind of ‘Object-lesson’ manual), and still more by his *Janua Linguarum Reserata* (“The door of languages unlocked,” i.e. a kind of ‘Latin made easy’), the latter published in 1631. ... The originality of its method consisted in weaving all useful words into a series of paragraphs, so that they may be learned in a short time, without the tediousness of a nomenclature. ... This is what has since been continually attempted in books of education. ... No one before Commenius seems to have thought of this method. ... If a compendious mode of getting at Latin words were the object, the works of Commenius would answer the purpose beyond those

of any classical author, ... but according to the received principles of philological literature they are such books as every teacher should keep out of the hands of his pupils.' Milton's own acquisition of languages, and his assimilation of the spirit as well as the form of ancient literatures, were the results of such an entirely different method (cf. on p. 2, l. 15) that he and 'Master Samuel Hartlib,' to whom he dedicated his tract on *Education* (1644), and with whom he seems to have threshed out the matter in many a long discussion, must have agreed to differ on many rather essential points. The tract contains in its eight pages an outline of what Milton considers to be the object of education, and of the method by which this object is to be attained. Education should be such culture as best 'fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war.' This culture is to be secured mostly through literature, especially the Greek and Latin literatures; these are, however, to be studied not merely (as at the Schools and Universities) for the sake of language but rather for the sake of facts and opinions. Indeed he by no means advocates a purely 'literary education'—that narrowest of all cultures. His curriculum includes such things as physical science, medicine, agriculture, theology, martial exercises, music, and travels. As Mr. Stopford Brooke remarks, it is plain that this system, however admirable it may be, would do for none but youths of leisure and fortune.

l. 28. *Nitor* ... : from Ovid, *Met.* 2. 72. 'I force my way against opposition, nor does that motion conquer me which conquers all besides: and I ride onwards contrary to the rapidly revolving sphere.' In what is generally called the Ptolemaic system (though it was devised long before the age of this Alexandrian astronomer, who lived about 150 A.D.), the outermost of the nine heavens (the Primum Mobile) was supposed to revolve with enormous velocity, and to communicate some of its motion (from east to west) to the next sphere, that of the Fixed Stars. The seven lower heavens were those of the seven planets, including the sun and moon. These revolved not only obliquely to the sidereal equator (*i.e.* on the ecliptic), but also moved ever slower the nearer they were to the earth, so that they lagged, some more and some less, behind the sidereal revolution. Thus the sun lags, as it were, about 4 minutes behind the stars in every 24 hours, or, in other words, the solar day is about 4 minutes longer than the sidereal day. Now this 'lagging' may be looked upon as a *contrary* motion, and it was sometimes thus described, as Ovid here describes it. [It is quite correct to speak of it as *contrary* motion if we do not regard the velocities as *angular*, *i.e.* with reference to the earth as a fixed point.]

l. 30. *to be regretted* .... Matthew Arnold (*French Critic*), while doing ample justice to the 'glow and mighty eloquence' of

Milton's prose works, remarks : 'grand thoughts and beautiful language do not form the staple of Milton's controversial treatises, though they occur in them not unfrequently. ... For the mass of his prose treatises *miserable discussions* is the final and right word.' He justly condemns, as must every one with any sense of ordinary decency, the personal abuse and scurrility which pervade these prose writings, and which must always be most painful to those who most love and admire Milton's poetry. 'Lord Macaulay,' says Matthew Arnold, 'regrets that the prose writings of Milton should not be more read. ... At any rate, they enable us to judge of Milton's temper, of his *freedom from asperity*. ... What a *gracious temper!* ... How *sedate and majestic!*'

1. 35. **Edmund Burke** (1729-97), the great Tory orator, friend of Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds, foremost prosecutor in the seven years' trial of Warren Hastings, and author of many treatises and pamphlets on political and social subjects, such as *Taxation*, *The French Revolution* etc. For his life and writings see Morley's *Engl. Lit.*, p. 867 sq., or Green's *History*, p. 775 sq. 'His speeches on the Stamp Acts and the American War lifted him into fame. The heavy Quaker-like figure, the little wig, the round spectacles, the cumbrous roll of paper which loaded Burke's pocket, gave little promise of a great orator and less of the characteristics of his oratory—its passionate ardour, its poetic fancy, its amazing prodigality of resources ; the dazzling succession in which irony, pathos, invective, tenderness, the most brilliant word-pictures, the coolest argument followed each other' (Green).

**Page 55, l. 6. a sevenfold chorus :** quoted from Milton's treatise on *The Reason of Church Government* (1641).

1. 10. **Areopagitica** : see on p. 41, l. 32.

1. 11. **Iconoclast** : see on p. 54, l. 25.

1. 12. **Treatise of Reformation.** The full title is *Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England, and the Causes that hitherto have hindered it.* This was the first of Milton's 25 political pamphlets. It was written in 1641, and was in favour of the Petition of 15,000 Londoners, presented to Parliament in 1640, against Episcopacy, and of the movement which ended in the Grand Remonstrance and the Civil War.

1. 13. **Animadversions** .... The title of this treatise, which was also written in 1641, is *Animadversions on the Remonstrant's defence against Smeectymnuus*. It was a violent attack on the Bishop of Norwich, Joseph Hall (see on p. 52, l. 17), who had published a *Humble Remonstrance* against the anti-episcopal Petition. [Joseph Hall, born 1574, had in earlier years won no small literary fame by his satires. He was given the living of Waltham Holy Cross, in Essex, and then the Bishopric of Exeter, whence he was translated to Norwich. He was one of the twelve

Bishops impeached and sent to the Tower in 1641.] This *Humble Remonstrance* had been answered by a pamphlet composed by five writers (Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurston), the initials of whose names were combined into the word *Smectymnuus*. Thereupon Bishop Hall replied with a *Defence of his Humble Remonstrance*, and Milton followed suit with his *Animadversions*. ‘It comments step by step on Hall’s work, and is both tiresome and as coarse as Swift in his coarse mood. ... A few passages of great nobility succour the weary reader, but only make him the more regret that Milton should have fallen into so much brutality’ (*Stopford Brooke*).

l. 18. this relic: the treatise *De Doctrina Christiana*. See prefatory note on p. i.

l. 25. We can almost fancy .... Macaulay borrows here, from the artist Richardson’s *Notes on Milton*, a description of a visit paid to Milton, in the last period of his life, by an old Dorsetshire clergyman, Dr. Wright. ‘He found John Milton, then growing old, in a small chamber hung with rusty green, sitting in an elbow-chair, and dressed neatly in black; pale, but not cadaverous; his hands and fingers gouty, and with chalk stones. He used to sit in a gray coarse cloth coat at the door of his house near Bunhill Fields in warm weather, to enjoy the fresh air. And so, as well as in his room, he received the visits of people of distinguished parts, as well as quality.’ See on p. 26, l. 36.

l. 28. twinkle of his eyes .... For Milton’s blindness, see on p. 26, l. 35.

**Page 56, l. 1. contest with his daughters ....** It is more than probable that Macaulay would have hardly needed to ‘contest the privilege,’ as far as Milton’s daughters are concerned. ‘His daughters,’ says Green, ‘who were forced to read to their blind father in language which they could not understand, revolted utterly against their bondage.’ ‘The occupation,’ says Mr. Pattison, ‘became so irksome to them, that they rebelled against it. In the case of one of them, Mary, this restiveness passed into open revolt. She first resisted, then neglected, and finally came to hate her father.’ Milton’s three daughters (at his death aged respectively 28, 26, and 22 years), Anne, Mary, and Deborah, brought a suit against their step-mother, Milton’s widow (née Elizabeth Munshill, his third wife, married in 1664, died in 1727), to contest their father’s will. Anne, who was ‘handsome but deformed, with an impediment in her speech,’ married someone whose name is unknown and died soon after. Mary, ‘the most disagreeably remembered of the three,’ as Prof. Masson expresses it, died unmarried probably about 1690. Deborah married a certain Abraham Clarke and lived for some years in Dublin, but the family (she had ten children in all) removed to Spitalfields,

where her husband employed himself as a silk weaver, and sank into poverty. Among those who took an interest in her, and exerted themselves to relieve her, was Addison. She died in 1727. Her daughter Elizabeth married a weaver, Foster by name, who afterwards kept a small grocer's shop. Public efforts were made to relieve her poverty—*one* of which was a performance of *Comus* at Drury Lane Theatre in 1750.

1. 2. **Ellwood.** ‘One of Milton's volunteer readers, and one to whom we owe the most authentic account of him in his last years, was a young Quaker, named Thomas Ellwood. ... Ellwood took a lodging near the poet, and went to him every day, except “first day,” in the afternoon, to read Latin to him’ (Pattison). The origin of *Paradise Regained* ‘is to be found in a pretty story told by Ellwood the Quaker’ (*Stopford Brooke*). When Ellwood visited Milton in 1665 at Chalfont, the poet put into his hands the MS. of *Paradise Lost*. On returning it Ellwood remarked, ‘Thou hast said much hero of Paradise lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise found?’ Milton ‘made no answer, but sate for some time in a muse.’

1. 12. **Boswellism:** James Boswell, the author of the famous *Life of Samuel Johnson*. In 1831 Macaulay reviewed Croker's edition of this work. The Right Hon. John Wilson Croker, Secretary to the Admiralty, was a political adversary of Macaulay, and perhaps of all human beings the one most cordially detested by him. His review is painfully personal and unfair. His absurd paradox about Boswell is almost too well known to repeat. ‘Shakspeare,’ he says, ‘is not more decidedly the first of dramatists, Demosthenes is not more decidedly the first of orators, than Boswell is the first of biographers. He has no second. He has distanced all his competitors so decidedly that it is not worth while to place them.’ But ‘of the talents which ordinarily raise men to eminence as writers, Boswell had absolutely none. ... He had, indeed, a quick observation and a retentive memory. These qualities, if he had been a man of sense and virtue, would scarcely of themselves have sufficed to make him conspicuous; but because he was a dunce, a parasite, and a coxcomb, they have made him immortal.’ In his *Essay on Pitt*, written in 1834, Macaulay rechristens his foundling. ‘Biographers,’ he says, ‘translators, editors, all, in short, who employ themselves in illustrating the lives or the writings of others, are peculiarly exposed to the *Lues Boswelliana*, or disease of admiration.’ In his *Warren Hastings* (1841), this ‘disease of the understanding, which is to writers of lives what the goitre is to an Alpine shepherd, or dirt-eating to a Negro slave,’ assumes the name *Furor Biographicus*.

1. 16. **sterling:** ‘When a given weight of gold or silver is of a given fineness, it is called *esterling* or *sterling metal*’ (Blackstone,

(*Com.* i. 7). Camden (*Remaines*) asserts that in the reign of Richard I. money coined in East Germany was in request on account of its purity, and that East Germans, or Esterlings, were brought over to England to 'bring the coine to perfection': hence standard coin was called *esterling*. Others derive it from 'steer,' *i.e.* the guiding standard of coinage (?).

I. 18. **Image and superscription:** 'And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?' (*St. Mark*, xii. 16).

I. 22. Philip Massinger (b. 1584, d. 1640) wrote during the reigns of James I. and Charles I. Of his numerous plays about 18 are extant. Many of them were composed by him in co-operation with Fletcher (who died of the plague in 1625). For his plots he borrowed considerably from Cervantes and other Spanish authors. The *Virgin Martyr* was written by him and a third-rate author named Dekker, in 1621. It is (as Massinger's editor, Clifford, says) a 'mixture of loathsome beastliness and angelic purity.' The Virgin Martyr is St. Dorothea, who suffered at Cesarea in Cappadocia in 300 A.D., during the persecution of Dioctrian. Sapritius, governor of Cesarea, had her arrested, and, as she proved incorrigible, he gave her over to two apostate females, Christe and Calliste, whom, however, she reconverted. She was then condemned to be executed. On her way to execution a lawyer named Theophilus mockingly asked her to send him some of the roses and fruits from Paradise, of which she had spoken. She promised to do so, and, as she knelt down at the block, a boy was soon standing at her side with a basket (or an *orurium*), in which were three roses and three apples. She bids the boy take the fruit and flowers to Theophilus. He does so, and disappears. Theophilus is converted, arrested, tortured, and executed. Massinger makes Theophilus a 'persecutor of the Christians,' and the father of Christota and Callista; Antonio, son of Sapritius, is in love with Dorothea, and the boy is converted into Angelo, a 'good spirit, serving Dorothea in the habit of a page.' As a *pendant* to Angelo, there is an evil spirit, Harpax, 'following Theophilus in the shape of a secretary.'

The following Sonnet by Wordsworth, written in 1802, expresses sentiments somewhat similar to those of Macaulay ; and, whether or not we can fully agree with all of these sentiments, the beauty and majesty of the lines are reposedful after the turbulent rhetoric of the Essay.

Milton ! Thou should'st be living at this hour.  
England hath need of thee. She is a fen  
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men.  
Oh, raise us up, return to us again,  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power !  
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart :  
Thou had'st a voice whose sound was like the sea.  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way  
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARIES.

**L—MILTON.**

MILTON'S LIFE.

---

1608. Milton born, December 9, the second of three surviving children. Eldest, Anne, married Phillips and afterwards Agar. Youngest, Christopher, afterwards judge and knighted.
1620. At St. Paul's School. Friendship with Alex. Gill, Headmaster's son, and Ch. Diodati.
1625. To Cambridge, Christ's College.

## ENGLISH HISTORY AND LIT.

## FOREIGN EVENTS.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1603. Elizabeth d.  | 1600. Calderon b.  |
| 1604. <i>Othello</i> (?) and <i>Measure for Measure</i> .                           |  |
| 1605. Gunpowder Plot.<br>Edm. Waller b.<br>Bacon's <i>Advancement of Learning</i> . | 1605. Cervantes' <i>Don Quixote</i> .  |
| 1606. <i>Macbeth</i> and <i>King Lear</i> .   | 1606. Pierre Corneille b.  |
| 1608. <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> .   | 1607. Rembrandt b.   |
| 1611. <i>Tempest</i> (?).   | 1608. Protestant 'Union.'  |
| 1612. Samuel Butler b.  | 1609. R. Catholic 'Liga.'  |
| 1613. Princess Elisabeth m. Fred. V., Elector Palatine.<br>Jeremy Taylor b.         | 1610. David Teniers b.<br>Henry IV. of France assassinated.<br>Louis XIII. succeeds. |
| 1615. Rise of Buckingham.<br>Richard Baxter b.                                      | 1612. Matthias Emperor.  |
| 1616. Shakspeare d.<br>Beaumont d.  | 1613. Murillo b.   |
| 1618. Cowley b.<br>Sir W. Raleigh executed.   | 1618-48. Thirty Years' War.  |
| 1620. Bacon's <i>Novvm Organvm</i> .  | 1619. Ferdinand II. Emperor.   |
| 1621. Bacon's Fall.   | 1620. Battle of White Hill (Prag).<br>Pilgrim Fathers (Mayflower).                   |
| 1624. George Fox b.   | 1621. Phillip III. of Spain d.   |
| 1625. James I. d.<br>Fletcher dies of the plague.<br>Expedition to Cadiz.           | 1622. Palatinateloſt by Frederick  |
|   | 1623. Prince Charles at Madrid.  |
|   | 1625. Wallenstein's first army.<br>Ruyſdael b.                                       |

## MILTON'S LIFE.

1626. *Latin Elegies*, etc.; Lines *On death of a fair Infant* (his niece)—his first English poem. Quarrel with College Tutor. Rustication.
1628. *Vacation Exercise* (preludings of the future ‘organ-voice’).
1629. B.A. *Ode on the Nativity*.
1630. *The Circumcision*; *Epitaph on Shakspeare*; *A Solemn Music*.
1632. M.A. Camb. *Sonnet I.* Retires to Horton in Bucks, where he lives for five years with his father, ‘turning over the Latin and Greek writers’ and visiting London to hear ‘something new in mathematics and music.’ Nor during these years merely receptive.
1633. *Arcades* (possibly in 1631), the ‘part of a Mask’ given to the aged Countess Dowager of Derby. Probably also *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.
1634. *Comus*, ‘a Mask presented at Ludlow Castle before John, Earl of Bridgewater,’ with music by Henry Lawes. Lady Alice Egerton, the Earl’s daughter, and her brothers play the parts. It was published anonymously by Lawes in 1637.
1635. M.A. Oxford.
1637. *Lycidas*, written for a collection of verses made by Cambridge friends in memory of Ed. King, drowned in crossing to Ireland.
- 1638-9. Continental travels: Paris (Grotius); Florence (Galileo); Rome; Naples (Manso); Geneva. *Italian Sonnets* and *Epitaphium Damonis* (Elegy on death of Ch. Diodati). On return undertakes tuition of nephews at house near St. Bride’s Churchyard. Shortly afterwards moves to Aldersgate Street.

## ENGLISH HISTORY AND LIT.

## FOREIGN EVENTS.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1626. Forced Loan.<br>Bacon <i>d.</i>  |   |
| 1628. Petition of Right.<br>Murder of Buckingham.<br>Tonnage and Poundage.<br>Bunyan <i>b.</i>             | 1628. Siege of Stralsund.   |
| 1629. Breach between Charles<br>and Commons.   |   |
| 1631. Dryden <i>b.</i><br>George Herbert's <i>Sacred<br/>Poems.</i>  | 1630. Gust. Adolphus lands.<br>Wallenstein deposed.   |
| 1632. Wentworth (Strafford) in<br>Ireland.<br>Samuel Pepys <i>b.</i><br>John Locke <i>b.</i>               | 1631. Sack of Magdeburg.<br>Battle of Breitenfeld.<br>Gust. Adolphus at Mainz.                                  |
| 1633. Laud, Archbp. of Canterbury.   | 1632. Gust. Adolphus slain at<br>Battle of Lützen.<br>Spinoza <i>b.</i><br>Galileo before the Inquisi-<br>tion. |
| 1634. First Ship-money Writ.   | 1634. Wallenstein murdered at<br>Eger.  |
| 1637. Hampden refuses to pay<br>Ship-money.<br>Revolt in Edinburgh.<br>Ben Jonson <i>d.</i>                | 1635. Lope de Vega, Spanish<br>poet, <i>d.</i>  |
| 1640. Short Parliament.<br>Long Parliament meets,<br>Nov. 3.<br>Massinger <i>d.</i><br>Wycherley <i>b.</i> | 1636. French Academy founded.   |
|  | 1637. Ferdinand III. Emperor.<br>Descartes' <i>Discourse on<br/>Method.</i>                                     |
|  | 1639. Racine <i>b.</i><br>Bernard of Weimar <i>d.</i>   |
|  | 1640. Rubens <i>d.</i> at Antwerp.<br>Frederick William the<br>'Great Elector.'                                 |

## MILTON'S LIFE.

1641. The 'Pamphlet Year': *Of Reformation in England; Prelatical Episcopacy; Reason of Church Government; Animadversions.* Drafts of subjects for an Epic (Trinity Coll. MS.) among these several of *Paradise Lost.*
1642. *Apology for Smeectymnuus. Sonnet:* 'When an assault was intended to the city.'
1643. Marries Mary Powell. She goes home to her father and refuses to return.
1644. *Areopagitica* (Freedom of Press); *Tract on Education;* Two Divorce Tracts.
1645. Two more Divorce Tracts (*Tetrachordon* and *Colasterion*); two Sonnets against 'detractors.' His wife returns. Moves from Aldersgate to Barbican.
1646. Breaks with Presbyterians. Sonnet on 'Forcers of Conscience.' Publishes collected Poems. His father dies.
1647. Gives up pupils and moves to house near Lincoln's Inn Fields.
1649. Sight begins to fail. Made 'Secretary for foreign tongues' to the Council. Moves to Whitehall. *Tenure of Kings; Eikonoklastes.*

## ENGLISH HISTORY AND LIT.

## FOREIGN EVENTS.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1641. Strafford executed.<br>Charles in Scotland.<br>Irish Massacre.<br>Grand Remonstrance.<br>Impeachment of the 12<br>Bishops.   | 1641. Van Dyck <i>d.</i> in England.                               |
| 1642. Attempt on the 5 Members.<br>Charles before Hull.<br>Charles raises standard at<br>Nottingham.<br>(1st Civil War.)<br>Edgehill, Oct. 23.<br>Isaac Newton <i>b.</i> , Christmas<br>Day. | 1642. Tortenson and Swedes vic-<br>torious at Leipzig.             |
| 1643. Assembly of Divines at<br>Westminster.<br>Solemn League and Coven-<br>ant.<br>Siege of Gloucester.<br>1st Battle of Newbury.<br>Pym and Hampden <i>d.</i>                              | 1643. Louis XIII. <i>d.</i><br>Copernicus publishes his<br>System. |
| 1644. Marston Moor, <i>July</i> .<br>2nd Battle of Newbury, <i>Oct.</i><br>William Penn <i>b.</i>  |  |
| 1645. New 'Model' Army.<br>Naseby, <i>June</i> .<br>Laud executed.   | 1645. Turenne and Condé in<br>Germany.                             |
| 1646. Charles surrenders to Scots.   |  |
| 1647. Scots give Charles up to<br>Parliament.<br>Army occupies London,<br><i>Aug.</i><br>Flight of Charles to Isle of<br>Wight.  |  |
| 1648. Revolt of fleet and Kent.<br>(2nd Civil War.)<br>Preston, <i>Aug.</i> 18.<br>Pride's Purge, <i>Dec.</i><br>Royal Society (at Oxford).  | 1648. Peace of Westphalia.   |
| 1649. Charles beheaded, <i>Jan.</i> 30.  |  |
| 1650. Cromwell in Scotland.<br>Battle of Dunbar.   |  |

## MILTON'S LIFE.

- 
1651. Moves to 'garden-house' in Petty France, Westminster, overlooking St. James' Park. *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano.*
1652. Total eclipse of eyesight.
1653. His wife dies.
1654. *Defensio secunda.*
1655. Sonnet 'On the late massacre in Piedmont.'
1656. Marries Catherine Woodcock.
1658. His second wife dies. Sonnet: 'Methought I saw . . .  
Begins *Par. Lost.*'
1659. *Way to remove Hirelings*, and other Treatises.
1660. *Ready and easy way to establish a Free Commonwealth.*  
In hiding. In custody. *Defensio* and *Eikonoklastes* burnt by hangman. Loses much property. Lodges in Holborn, then in Jewin Street.

## ENGLISH HISTORY AND LIT.

## FOREIGN EVENTS.

1651. Battle of Worcester.  
Union with Scotland and Ireland.  
*Hobbes' Leviathan.*
1652. War with Holland.  
Victory of Tromp.
1653. Victory of Blake.  
Dissolution of the Long Parliament.  
'Barebone's' Parliament (*July-Dec.*).  
*Instrument of Government.*  
Cromwell Protector.
1654. Cromwell's 1st Parliament.
1655. Parliament dissolved.  
The Major-Generals.  
French Alliance.  
Blake in the Mediterranean.  
Conquest of Jamaica.
1656. 2nd Protectorate Parliament.  
*Humble Petition and Advice.*
1657. Cromwell refuses Kingship, and installed anew as Protector.
1658. 2nd Parliament dissolved.  
Battle of the Dunes.  
Dunkirk ceded to England.  
Cromwell dies, *Sept. 3.*  
Rich. Cromwell Protector.
1659. Long Parliament recalled and expelled.
1660. Monk enters London.  
The 'Rump' dissolves itself.  
Charles' Declaration of Breda.  
Charles lands, *May.*  
Union with Scotland and Ireland dissolved.
1661. Daniel de Foe *b.*
1662. Charles *m.* Catharine of Braganza.  
Dunkirk sold to Louis XIV.
1653. Moliere's first play.
1655. Massacre of Vaudois.
1657. Leopold I. Emperor.
1660. Velasquez *a*

## MILTON'S LIFE.

- 
- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1664. | Marries Elisabeth Munshill. Moves to house opposite Artillery Ground, Bunhill Row. Here he resides till his death.                         |
| 1665. | During Plague at Chalfont, Bucks, in house hired by Ellwood. <i>Par. Lost</i> completed. <i>Par. Regained</i> begun.                       |
| 1666. | His house in Bread Street burnt.   |
| 1667. | <i>Par. Lost</i> published.  |
| <br>  |  |
| 1669. | <i>History of England.</i>   |
| 1670. | <i>Par. Regained</i> and <i>Samson Agonistes</i> published.  |
| <br>  |  |
| 1673. | <i>On true Religion, Heresy, and Schism.</i> Early Poems republished. <i>De Doctrina Christiana</i> : left partly copied out at his death. |
| 1674. | Second edition of <i>Par. Lost</i> .<br>Dies Nov. 8.   |
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## ENGLISH HISTORY AND LIT.

## FOREIGN EVENTS.

1664.	War with Holland.	1664	Turks def. by Austrians and Hungarians at St. Gothard on the Raab. Racine's first tragedy.
1665.	Five Mile Act. Plague in London. Newton's <i>Theory of Fluxions</i> .	1665.	Philip IV., of Spain, d. Charles II. succeeds.
1666.	Fire of London.		
1667.	The Dutch in the Medway. Peace of Breda. Clarendon exiled		
1668.	The Triple Alliance (England, Holland, Sweden). Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (with France)		
1670.	Treaty of Dover. Bunyan's <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i> .	1669.	Turks conquer Crete.
1671.	Newton's <i>Theory of Light</i> . Charles intrigues with Louis XIV.		
1672.	War renewed with Holland. Declaration of Indulgence.	1672.	Louis XIV. attacks Holland. The 'Great Elector' aids the Dutch.
1673.	Declaration of Indulgence withdrawn. Shaftesbury dismissed. James m. Mary of Modena.	1673.	Moliere d.
1674.	Peace with Holland. Danby, Lord Treasurer.		
1675.	Secret treaties of Charles with Louis.		
1677.	Mary m. William of Orange.		
1678.	The 'Popish Plot'. Shaftesbury in power.		
1682.	The Rye House Plot.		
1683.	Algernon Sidney and Lord Russell executed.	1683.	Turks routed by Polish King Sobieski before Vienna. Calderon d.
1685.	Charles II. d. James II. succeeds. Monmouth's rebellion. Bloody Assizes.		

## II.—MACAULAY.

1800. Thomas Babington, son of Zachary Macaulay and Elisabeth (*née* Selina Mills), born, Oct. 25th, at the Manor House, Rothley Temple, near Leicester, the residence of his uncle, Mr. Babington.
1812. Sent to private school at Little Shelford, near Cambridge. The school removed in 1814 to Aspenden Hall, near Buntingford. He remains under charge of Mr. Preston, the head-master, until 1818. About 1816 was his first appearance in print—an anonymous letter sent to his father's *Christian Observer*, in which he scandalised the readers of that journal by eulogising Fielding and Smollett.
1818. Goes into residence at Trinity College, Cambridge.
- 1821-3. Gains a Craven Scholarship, Prize for Latin Declamation, and two Chancellor's medals for English verse. Is 'plucked' for the Mathematical Tripos, and thus prevented from competing for the Chancellor's medals for Classics—then the highest test of scholarship.
- 1823-4. Writes for Charles Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*: two battle-pieces in verse, *Ivy* and *Naseby*; the *Conversation between Cowley and Milton*; *Criticisms on Italian writers* (*Dante, Petrarch*), etc.
1824. His father fails in business. Macaulay takes pupils and determines to retrieve the loss, and to help his brothers and sisters. Elected Fellow of Trinity College. Is asked to write for the *Edinburgh Review* (founded 1802). Makes his first public speech before an Anti-slavery Meeting.
1825. His *Essay on Milton* excites a sensation in literary circles.
1826. Called to the bar, and joins the Northern circuit, but with no serious intention of adopting the law as his profession.
1827. Essay on *Machiavelli*.
1828. Is made a Commissioner of Bankruptcy under Wellington's administration—'a rare piece of luck' considering Macaulay's extreme anti-Toryism. He longs to be in Parliament, 'his heart and soul being filled' by the Repeal of the Test Act, the Emancipation of the Catholics, and other such questions. Essays on *Hallam's Const. Hist.* and *Dryden*.
1829. Essays on *James Mill*. The Catholic Emancipation Bill is proposed by the Duke, and becomes law.

1830. Offered by Lord Lansdowne a seat for the borough of Calne.  
Maiden speech in Parliament on Jewish Disabilities. Visits Paris. Essay on *Montgomery's Poems*.
1831. Invited to stand for Leeds. Essays on *Boswell's Johnson* and *Byron*.
1832. Speeches on the Reform Bill. Elected a Commissioner and then Secretary of the Board of Control. Member for Leeds in the Reformed Parliament.
1833. Essay on *Horace Walpole*. Elected Member of the Supreme Council of India.
1834. First Essay on *Chatham*. Arrives in India, with his sister Hannah, who soon after marries Mr. Trevelyan.
1835. President of Committee of Public Education (India). Essay on *Mackintosh's Revolution*.
1837. As President of Law Commission, drafts Penal Code. Papers on Education, Press, etc., and indefatigable study, especially of the Classics. Essay on *Bacon*.
1838. Returns to England. Essay on *Temple*. Plots his *History*. Tour in Italy. At Rome has the offer from Lord Melbourne of the Judge-Advocateship, which he declines.
1839. In London. Essay on *Gladstone*. M.P. for Edinburgh and Secretary of War.
1840. Essays on *Clive* and *von Ranke*. Settles in the 'Albany.'
- 1841-2. Essays on *Warren Hastings* and *Frederic the Great*. On dissolution of Parliament re-elected for Edinburgh. *Lays of Ancient Rome*.
1843. Essays republished. Essay on *Addison*. Trip to the Loire.
1844. In Holland. Second Essay on *Chatham*.
1846. Paymaster-General of the Army. Re-elected as Member for Edinburgh.
1847. Parliament again dissolved. Macaulay defeated at Edinburgh, and retires into private life, devoting himself to his *History*.
1848. Elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University. First two volumes of *History* published.
1852. Re-elected for Edinburgh. Serious illness. Visit to Edinburgh. Speaks his last words in the House of Commons.
1854. Draws up Report on Competitive Examinations. Resides in cottage at Ditton Marsh. D.C.L. Oxford. [During later years was member of Academies of Munich, Turin, and Utrecht; received Orders of Merit etc.; was President of various Philosophical and other Institutions, Trustee of British Museum, Professor of Ancient Literature to the Royal Academy etc. etc.]

- 1855. Third and fourth volumes of *History* published—the ‘whole weight of the edition is 56 tons.’
- 1856. Failing health. Resigns his seat for Edinburgh. Settles at Holly Lodge, Campden Hill, where he has his ‘little paradise of shrubs and turf.’
- 1857. High Steward of the Borough of Cambridge. Created Baron Macaulay of Rothley.
- 1858. *Biography of Pitt* in the *Encycl. Brit.* (Other lives by him are those of Bunyan, Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson, and Atterbury.)
- 1859. Visits English Lakes and Scotland. Seriously ill towards end of year. On Dec. 28 ‘musters strength to dictate a letter to a poor curate enclosing twenty-five pounds,’ and a few hours later dies.

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## A PARAPHRASE.

*O fons modorum magna sonantium,  
Divine vates, sive hominum canis  
Seu res deorum, O qui per annos  
Voce tonas maris instar omnes—*

*Isti ut refulyent sidcreis Patris  
Armis corusci Caelicolae ! In poli  
Culmen gigantei ut minantur  
Aethereis reboans catervis !*

*Me, qua remotum mobilibus nemus  
Rivis rigatur celsaque plurimis  
Qua cedrus impendet rosetis,  
Allicit Elysium vagantem,*

*Ut cui renidens purpureo mari  
Coloribus sol Indicus insulam  
Tinxit, rubescentesque palmae  
Vespere odorifero susurrant.*

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